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THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The principal aim and object of this Society is to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or color. The subsidiary objects are: The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and the investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

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NOTES AND COMMENTS

JANUARY, 1917

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EASTERN AND WESTERN PSYCHOLOGY

A Theosophical Need

MR. JUDGE writes, in one of the closing chapters of *The Ocean of Theosophy,* that "there is no Western Psychology worthy of the name . . . Real psychology is an Oriental product to-day . . . for the present day psychology in its true phase belongs to the Orient . . ." Mr. Judge was writing of the "psychology without a soul," which grew up as an adjunct and extension of physiology; of the official psychology of the schools. This he shows clearly, when he says, among other things, that "the Roman Catholic branch of the Christian Church is in some respects an exception, however. It has always admitted the existence of the psychic world. . . ."

The purpose of these Notes is to try to show that there is, in the West, and in the direction indicated by Mr. Judge, a very considerable volume of genuine psychology, of experimental spiritual science; that it very closely resembles that psychology of the Orient which has been spoken of above; and that all that is needed, to bring out this resemblance, amounting very often to complete identity, is the translation of the terms of the one body of experimental spiritual science into the terms of the other: a task which students of Theosophy may very profitably undertake, not only as a lawful exercise in "the Theosophic method," but also because extremely valuable results will be gained, and without any undue labour or difficulty.

There is an obstacle at the outset: the students of this experimental science of things spiritual have been constrained to use, to set forth the results of their observations, the only available terms—for the most part, the terms of popular theology; more than that, their observations have very often been influenced by the fact that their minds and imaginations were deeply coloured by the images of popular theology, and, since these observations must of necessity be made through the medium of the mind and the imagination, that colouring adheres to most of their results. This

had one great advantage: it made much of their most valuable work immediately intelligible and acceptable to those whose minds were coloured in the same way; available, therefore, for popular use, for the needs of daily life. But there is, to some degree, a corresponding disadvantage: those whose training has given their minds a different colouring will have difficulty in separating the facts of spiritual life observed from the traditional colouring of the medium in which they are recorded; they may even feel inclined to turn away from them, because of that colouring. But, as has been said, this would seem to be exactly the opportunity for students of Theosophy, for those who seek to put in practice the Theosophic method.

We may, perhaps, illustrate this colouring by an extreme case: a passage from *The Revelations of Saint Gertrude:* "At the Antiphon, she beheld the heavens opening, while the angels descended and placed a magnificent throne in the centre of the choir, whereon the Queen of Glory was seated, and manifested how lovingly she received the prayers and devotion of the religious on this Festival. The angels stood round this throne, attending the Mother of their God with the greatest respect and joy. The Saint also saw an angel standing by each of the religious, with a branch in his hand; and this branch produced different kinds of fruit and flowers, according to the devotion of the sister who was thus attended. At the conclusion of the Office, the angels brought these branches to the Blessed Virgin to adorn her throne. Then Gertrude exclaimed 'Alas, kind Mother! I do not deserve to be thus united with the choirs of the blessed.' She replied: 'Your good-will suffices; and the devout intention which you had at Vespers far exceeds any corporal work; to assure you of this, I will present your branch of fruit and flowers to the adorable Trinity, as an oblation of the highest merit.' At Matins she beheld how the angels gathered the flowers and fruit of the different intentions of the religious, and presented them to the Virgin Mother. The flowers appeared more brilliant and beautiful in proportion to the earnestness of each; and the sweetness of the fruit corresponded with the purity and fervour of their devotion. . . . On another occasion, when the same Response was chanted, Saint Gertrude saw a troop of demons, who surrounded the religious, showing them the pomps and vanities of the world. But at the words, *Regnum mundi . . . contempsi,* the demons fled in confusion. . . ."

Had Gertrude been a Buddhist, instead of a Christian nun, she might have interpreted and expressed her spiritual experience in some such terms as these: "When the dispensation has disappeared, the relics of the Buddha will come from every place; from the serpent world, from the world of the gods, and from the Brahma-world; and having congregated together at the throne under the Great Bo-tree, they will make an effigy of the Buddha and perform a miracle resembling the

double-miracle, and will teach the Doctrine. Not a single human being will be found at that place; but all the gods from ten thousand worlds will come together and listen to the Doctrine, and many thousands of them will attain to the Doctrine. And these will cry aloud, saying, 'Divine sirs, on the seventh day from now our One Possessing the Ten Forces will pass into Nirvana.' Then they will weep, saying, 'From henceforth we shall be in darkness.' Then the relics will put forth flames of fire and burn up that effigy without remainder. . . . But who shall not behold Maitreya Buddha, the Blessed One? and who shall behold Him? One who creates a schism in the church, as it is said, 'Devadatta remains in hell for the entire world-cycle,' as well as all others born in the Avitchi hell, from the performing of the five crimes that constitute 'proximate karma,' those cherishing wholly heretical views, and those who slander the noble disciples, shall not see Him. The naked ascetics who create a schism by denying the congregation allowable privileges shall not see Him. All other beings who give gifts, keep the precepts, keep fast-days, fulfil their religious duties, found shrines, plant sacred fig-trees, parks and groves, make bridges, clear the highways, take their stand in the precepts, and dig wells, shall see Him. Those who, in their longing for a Blessed One, shall make a gift, even if only a handful of flowers, or of a single lamp, or of a mouthful of food, shall see Him. Those who further the religion of the Buddha, prepare the pavilion and the seats for the preachers of the Doctrine, bring forward the fan, make offerings of cloth, canopies, garlands, incense, or lamps, or are stanch sustainers of the ministrations of the Doctrine, shall see Him. . . ."

Had Saint Gertrude been an orthodox Hindu, the terms of her vision might have run somewhat thus: "I behold the gods in Thy body, O Divine One! and all the hosts of diverse beings; Brahma the Creator, seated on the lotus throne, and all the Seers and Serpents of wisdom. . . ." But in each case, we should have, it would seem, an entirely real vision of the spiritual world and its inhabitants, a vision coloured by the mind and imagination of the Seer, but none the less, embodying the most vital truths of spiritual reality. For it will easily be seen that, apart from this difference of colouring, the three visions which we have quoted are essentially the same; are genuine revelations of the world which is hidden from the eyes that see not, but in whose midst we dwell.

Or one may take a passage of quite different character, as abstract and intellectual as the revelation of Saint Gertrude is concrete and full of feeling; a passage like this, from Father Augustine Baker's *Sancta Sophia,* in the edition called *Contemplative Prayer:* "Experience teaches us that in good Christians there are two internal lights or teachers, namely, the spirit of corrupt nature, and the Divine Spirit. Both offer themselves in our deliberate actions, and even strive with one another

for the mastery over us. Each seeks to lead us into a path and to an end contrary to the other. The natural spirit, on the one hand, teaches us to gratify our sensual desires or worldly aims, which are most hurtful to the soul. The Spirit of God, on the other hand, discovers to us the folly and danger of following such a guide. It teaches us that our happiness consists in renouncing it; in turning into paths leading in a contrary direction; in abandoning sensual pleasures and our own convenience, in so far as they are a hindrance, or rather, not an aid, to the knowledge of God and spiritual things. For this must be the object of our desires and efforts whereby alone we can arrive at eternal happiness and union with God . . ."

Had Father Baker been, not a good Christian, but a man of like spirituality in a far earlier age, he might, instead, have phrased his teaching thus: *"Death speaks:* The better is one thing, the dearer is another thing; these two bind a man in opposite ways. Of these two, it is well for him who takes the better; he fails of his object, who chooses the dearer. The better and the dearer approach a man; going round them, the sage discerns between them. The sage chooses the better rather than the dearer; the fool chooses the dearer, through lust of possession. Thou indeed, pondering on dear and dearly-loved desires, O Nachiketas, hast passed them by. Not this way of wealth hast thou chosen, in which many men sink. Far apart are these two ways, unwisdom and what is known as wisdom. I esteem thee, Nachiketas, as one seeking wisdom, nor do manifold desires allure thee. Others, turning about in unwisdom, self-wise and thinking they are learned, fools, stagger, lagging in the way, like the blind led by the blind. The great Beyond gleams not for the child, led away by the delusion of possessions. 'This is the world, there is no other,' he thinks, and so falls again and again under Death's dominion. . . ."

The holy Benedictine, from whose *Sancta Sophia* we have quoted, cites, from Cardinal Bellarmine, these sentences: ". . . Yet after all this, they are so devoid of devotion and the Spirit of God, so earnest in the love of secular vanities, so filled with impatience, envy, and all inordinate desires, that they seem to differ not one jot from secular persons wholly taken up with the world. The only cause of these disorders is that they do not seriously enter into their own hearts by exercises of introversion, but only esteem and regard the exterior. . . ."

Had the learned and pious Cardinal written instead in the language of the Upanishads, he might, perhaps, have said: "The Self-Being pierced the openings of the senses outwards; hence one looks outward, not within himself. A wise man looked towards the Self with introverted sight, seeking immortality. Children seek after outward desires; they come to

the net of widespread Death. But the wise, beholding deathlessness, seek not for the enduring among unenduring things. . . ."

Again, we find the author of *Sancta Sophia* writing: "For this reason devout souls are to be exhorted to keep themselves as much as possible in solitude and abstraction, so that they may be able to discern the Divine voice. And if they yield themselves faithfully to God's guidance, He will not be wanting to them in anything. . . . And if we are capable of learning God's will in such things—and who can doubt it?—acting thus, in the spirit of resignation, without haste, passion, or self-love, must surely be the best and safest way of attaining to that knowledge."

If he had written in the tongue of the Upanishads, he might have said this: "Let him find the pathway of the Soul. Finding it he is not stained by evil. He who knows is therefore full of peace, lord of himself; he has ceased from false gods, he is full of endurance, he intends his will. In his soul he beholds the Soul. He beholds all things in the Soul. Nor does evil reach him; he passes all evil. He is free from evil, free from stain, free from doubt, a knower of the Eternal. . . ."

Or we might take from Father Baker a passage like this: "The soul must be careful not to entertain a hope that God will manifest His Will to her in an extraordinary way, as by an angel or a revelation. Ordinarily such hopes could proceed from nothing but pride; and were God to grant her wish, it is to be feared it would only increase her pride and do her much harm. There are two ways in which God ordinarily intimates His Will to His servants. The first is by clearing the understanding and infusing into it a supernatural light, through which the natural reason sees something new or something it had not rightly understood. By this light of supernatural discretion the obscurities which hindered the reason from seeing the truth are removed. These obscurities are generally caused by sensuous images which have taken possession of the imagination, or by natural interests which have engaged the affections. By these reason is pushed on to form a judgment and choice before the soul has weighed maturely and impartially the circumstances, so that reason devoid of the supernatural light kindled by charity determines in favour of the side to which the imagination or passions incline her. . . ."

We might be inclined to compare this with certain of the rules of the sage, Patanjali; for example, these rules, from his first book: "Memory is the holding fast to mind-images of things perceived. The control of these psychic activities comes through the right use of the will, and through ceasing from self-indulgence. The right use of the will is

the steady effort to stand in spiritual being. This becomes a firm resting-place, when followed long, persistently, with righteousness. Ceasing from self-indulgence is conscious mastery over the thirst for sensuous pleasures here or hereafter. The consummation of this is freedom from thirst for any mode of psychical activity, through the establishment of the spiritual man. . . ." Or we might choose these sentences, from the fourth book: "The psychic nature, universally adaptive, takes on the colour either of things seen, or of the Seer. The psychic nature, which has been printed with mind-images of innumerable things, exists now for the Spiritual Man, subordinate to him. For him who discerns between the mind and the Spiritual Man, there comes perfect fruition of the longing after the real being of the Self. Thereafter, the whole personal being bends toward illumination, full of the spirit of Eternal Life. . . ."

Father Baker expresses the same consummation thus: "This is the best and safest light a man can have. And we must acknowledge it to be supernatural, because it illuminates us in supernatural things, discovers to us the relation between the action and our supernatural end, and extinguishes the light of carnal reason by which the things of God are not seen or are esteemed foolishness. It is to be accepted as the very light of God's Holy Spirit, a light which cannot be obtained by study, nor instilled into us by the most spiritual person in the world. Moreover, this light exceeds the efficacy of the ordinary permanent light of faith by which we see supernatural objects in a general manner only, and the means leading to them. But by this lamp kindled in our understanding by prayer and charity we clearly discern the relation and capacity of each action and circumstance to dispose us to perfect union with God by love. . . ."

One may find, too, a very great likeness to the great Adwaita Teacher, Shankaracharya, in such a passage as this, from a treatise by Saint Francis de Sales, *Of the Love of God:* "When the sun rises red and turbid, or sets pale and watery, we say there will be rain. Yet in truth the sun is not subject to any such changeableness, and its light is invariable and perpetual; the appearances which alter its brightness are but those mists and clouds of earth which rise up before our mortal sight. Even so with God: we are wont to speak of Him not as He really is, but according as we behold Him through the mists of our earthly vision. We speak as though He possessed various qualities and characteristics; we talk of His Justice, His Mercy, His Omnipotence, His Truth, His Wisdom. Yet, verily, there is no variation in God, He is One sole, uniform perfection; whatever is in Him is but Himself, and the many qualities we define in Him are Unity. Just as the sun has but one clear brightness infinitely beyond all the colours we attribute to it, a brightness which in reality gives them their manifold hues, so God is One All-pervading Excellence, far above all our notions of perfection,

and imparting whatever perfectness is to be found in all such perfection. Nor is it within compass of anything created, whether human or angelic, fitly to name this Supreme Excellence; even as we are told in the Apocalypse that 'He has a Name, which no man knew but He Himself.' And so the Fathers have said that there is no real theologian save God, inasmuch as none can truly know the Infinite Greatness of His Divine Perfection nor fitly speak of it save Himself. . . ."

If, then, God be thus in Himself unknown, unknowable, how are we to know Him, to find union with Him?—We come thus, of necessity to the teaching of the Divine Incarnation, called in the East the Avatar doctrine. We may illustrate it by the popular version found in Buddhism: "When it is known that after a lapse of a thousand years an omniscient Buddha is to arise in the world, the guardian angels of the world wander about, proclaiming: Sirs, after the lapse of a thousand years a Buddha will arise in the world, in order to save the world. . . ."

Or we may take the more abstract version of the same teaching in the *Bhagavad Gita:* "Though I am the Unborn, the Soul that passes not away, though I am the lord of beings, yet as lord over My nature I become manifest, through the magical power of the Soul. For whenever there is a withering of the Law, O son of Bharata, and an uprising of lawlessness on all sides, then I manifest Myself, for the salvation of the righteous, and the destruction of such as do evil; for the firm establishing of the Law I come to birth in age after age. He who thus perceives My birth and work as divine, as in truth it is, leaving the body, he goes not to rebirth; he goes to Me, Arjuna. . . . Nor am I visible to all wrapt in My magical glamour; this world, deluded, recognizes Me not, unborn, everlasting. I know all beings, Arjuna, the past, the present, those that are to come; but Me none knows. . . . They whose darkness is gone, who are workers of righteousness, free from the delusion of the opposites, worship Me, firm in their vows. They who strive for freedom from age and death, taking refuge in Me, know the Eternal, the All, the highest Self, the perfect Work. They who know Me as the highest Being, the highest Divinity, the highest Sacrifice, even in death perceive Me, their hearts united in Me. . . ."

One may cite, for comparison with this, a very beautiful development of the same doctrine of Divine Incarnation, as applied to the Western Avatar: "The supernatural life comprises two elements: *sanctifying grace,* a true participation in God's nature which transforms the soul; and *actual grace,* God's real action within us, which sets our transformed faculties in motion.

"But, to produce this transformation and impart this motion is a work reserved to God.—Why reserved to Him? There is an excellent

reason for it: this work requires omnipotence, and it is superior to that of creation.

"But then, what part does Jesus play, and on what ground can we call Him into our life?

"In Jesus, there are both the divinity and the humanity. The divinity retains all its infinite attributes, and fulfils all its proper acts. The humanity is made, like ours, of body and soul. As it does not constitute any personality, it enters into the personality of the Son of God.

"His divinity can do nothing but what is divine: it cannot abase itself nor suffer nor adore nor submit. Although it knows our feelings and joys and sorrows in an eminent manner, it is incapable of experiencing them. Nor could it win merits; and, although it can pardon, it cannot expiate.

"It is wanting in these powers, and the sacred humanity supplies them to it. The sacred humanity has our manner of feeling and loving. Its condition bids it submit, and enables it to suffer, and binds duties upon it; and these duties are carried out freely by its holy soul; and hence it wins merits.

"But these merits borrow a really infinite *value* from Jesus' divine personality; and although they are not by nature divine, they have the worth and splendour and scope of the divine. It is no mere name that covers them, but it is a personality that takes possession of them and transforms them. . . . His soul, which has its merits so far as concerns the infinite, has none so far as created things are concerned; but it is in this human soul of His that all these wonders are perpetually occurring. *He ever lives to make intercession for us.*"

We had thought, at the outset of these Notes, to quote rather passages which are, on the face of them, experimental, the fruit only of experience which, with due care and pains, we can repeat for ourselves. But the passages shaped themselves in a somewhat wider channel. Yet, if we look deeply into it, even those of largest sweep and scope are the result of experience and experiment; they are the fruit of that higher power of knowledge, that illumination, of which Patanjali and Father Baker write, in nearly identical terms. And the proof of this would seem to be that, once we set aside the local colouring of this or that period, the results, the great principles, are always and everywhere the same. This, indeed, is both natural and inevitable, since they are drawn from observation of the same eternal models; they are built upon the same spiritual experience, nay, on the life of the Soul itself, in union with the One Divine.

FRAGMENTS

I

"All of my gifts are two-edged swords; also my graces. Dedicated to my purposes, they are road-ways to the star-strewn skies, elements of Eternal Life. Prostituted to self, they become magnets of the devil, sure agencies of hell."

How can a sword become a roadway, Master?

"By obedience: try it against yourself and you will see."

And how can your graces become magnets of the devil?

"When the force within them is imprisoned in the metallic hardness of material life."

II

Master, the way is dark.

"Walk in my light; that shall be sufficient for you."

Master, the way is hard.

"Yet only as you lie upon the hard bed of the Cross shall you wake to the morning of Resurrection."

Master, give me strength for these.

"In my will is strength, the strength of Gethsemane's victory."

Master, must I then drain this cup?

"I, when I had drained the Father's cup, found it sweet, and in its strength went to Calvary."

Yet on the way, three times you fell.

"Yea, child, and so I compassionate your falls, and show you how to struggle up and on again. Since I have trodden the way, can you not trust me to know it?"

Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.

"O child, into my sure keeping I receive thee."

CAVÉ.

LETTERS TO FRIENDS

XXII

DEAR FRIEND:

SO you did not understand my story of Queen Nephthys and the most high gods, and I am to tell you, "without any parables," just what it means? No, that I cannot do; for, until the experience comes to us that makes all telling needless, there is no way, save that of parables, in which we can be told of life. We must read these eastern tales in the light of our own hearts, and in accordance with that light is the meaning that they will have for us.

But in truth you have more light than you recognize, and, perhaps, if I try to meet your request by asking you to look back into your own memory and heart and mind, you will find there the experience that will both illumine and be illuminated by this ancient tale of the answer of the gods to the prayers and needs of men.

Let us begin at the beginning: with the great feast made by the King for his infant son, and the Queen lying alone in her chamber. Can you not remember times in your own life when you were as she was then,—alone, helpless, with no apparent part in the rejoicing that you had suffered and laboured to make possible, with no apparent power to influence the issues that were still at stake? Surely that is an experience that must have come often to all of us, and it is seldom, perhaps, that we have been able to pass through it without a sense of disappointment and of loss. But the reality is quite other than the appearance. It was not to the feast in the great court, but to the silent chamber of the Queen that the high gods came that day. It was there they gave their gifts to her son; there that the issues were determined. And this is always true. Neither distance nor accident can separate us from the reality of that which we love, nor prevent our playing our true part in a cause that is our own.

Is not the lesson clear? And is it not one that comes home to all of us? Apply it to your own position in this great war,—where all for which your soul has laboured through the ages is at stake, where men to whom it means far less are laying down their lives in selfless simplicity, and you stand far off from it in an alien land, with the shame of impotency and safety gnawing at your heart. Your shame is only that you feel shame. Your impotency only when you believe yourself impotent. Your safety the figment of your imagination, for the life of your soul is at issue. Had Queen Nephthys wrapped herself in such thoughts of self as these, do you think the high gods would have come to her that day? Her love had no place for thoughts of self, and only self can stand between us and what we love. Powerless in every other way, she used the one supreme power to which all

being responds,—the power of love in prayer. I have been on many battlefields, where were fought out the destinies of nations, but the victory was won first, not there, but in some soul in prayer. And now that we are called to that crucial inner struggle, against the evil in our own natures that is the same as that which threatens all we love, shall we deem ourselves cut off and impotent? Or, to turn from great things to little, if we are prevented from attending some meeting where we had hoped to be, shall we feel ourselves left out? No one can leave us out from that to which our hearts turn, and we have not yet begun to realize the power that lies in prayer.

Again, how often have you not felt, in times of meditation, as though the Masters were close beside you, only hidden by some veil so that you could not see. And because you could not see you have feared to trust, feared really to believe. But in truth there was no veil, and it was because there was no veil that you could not see. For we have not yet learned to see the real, but only the veils around reality. Pure lights blinds us, as we are as yet; and so, in pity for our doubts and fears, many times the high gods come to us in the veils of our own thoughts and fancies, taking on the forms in which we picture them, speaking the language that is ours, using the terms and symbols of the religion to which we were born, or the philosophy with which we are familiar. I know that this has proved a stumbling block to you in reading the lives of the Christian saints. Their language, the language of their church and day, is not your language. And because Christ spoke to them in their language, as your Master speaks to you in your language, you have had difficulty in believing the truth both of their experience and your own. It is strange that we should find it so hard to realize that the Masters are gentlemen, and that we should make stumbling blocks of their exquisite courtesy. It is, perhaps, particularly strange that members of the Theosophical Society, who talk so much of the Theosophic method of meeting each man on the ground of his own truth, should so often fail to recognize this method in the revelations made to the saints and seers of different times and races. Let us remember that it was from the Masters themselves that we were taught this method,—and that they practise what they preach. The form is of man and of the time; but the essence is of the gods and of eternity.

There are two other points here, that I know are within your own experience, though I doubt whether you have realized their significance and universality. When the gods had come in answer to Queen Nephthys's prayer, and stood before her waiting to grant her what she asked, "whatsoever prayer she sought to make seemed as foolishness in the light of that veiled shining, and died unspoken on her lips." We are dumb before the real, dumb even as we are blind. The things that we had thought so great become suddenly small before the vastness of what is open to us,—before the tremendous issues of the serene infini-

tude of Being. We have not learned to think or pray in terms so great as these. It is the smallness of our desires that holds us dumb. Our prayer is so small a thing beside that which the Master prays for us; our love so little in comparison with his; what we ask so insignificant a part of what he waits to give. And yet, our prayers are all we have. It is they that have brought us to him, and, small though they are, they are all that we have learned how to ask. And so, "laying our will upon our tongue," and taking courage from the love that is so much greater than our own, we pray our prayers over, one by one.

It is the same thing that is manifest in every great crisis. When the moment comes it is too late to plan anew. Our past rises in us and acts through and for us. It is in literal fact a day of judgment. We ask what we have asked; and can do naught else.

But, in the compassion of the law, that judgment is not final. We can learn to desire more greatly, to ask for greater things,—even for the supreme thing that the Master longs and waits to give,—himself. Thus, when like Queen Nephthys, we have brought forth all the prayers that ever we have prayed, we know that there is one who still waits to give us more than these.

Was I not right in saying that this was within your own experience? It is somewhat harder to define the second of the two points I had in mind, but I am sure that it, too, is known to you, though you may not be able to say just how and where you realized its truth. There is a knowledge that is love's own, and has no part in self. Usually it is hidden from us, covered by that of self which mingles with our love. But when self is stripped away, when we see our own unwisdom and powerlessness to plan or judge rightly, and yet do not let ourselves be caught and held by that sense of inadequacy (for this is to sink still deeper into self), then from beneath all our own hopes and fears the knowledge that is love's may rise to consciousness. It is not a belief or a judgment. It is knowledge. It has nothing to do with what we ourselves may have wanted for the one we love. It is the need of that one's soul, its destined way, the Master's will for it, in which alone it can find its fulfilment and its peace. And because it is these things, it is our love's will also; at least in that moment of selflessness, of truth to the real self in us, *our* will as well,—the glad, deep, whole-souled prayer of our hearts. It is well for us if we store it in our memories and rest our acts upon it, for to fight against it is to fight against the one we love.

So much for the coming of the gods to Queen Nephthys and of her prayer for her son. Now for what followed, of which you say you "understood no single word." Well, perhaps no single word was meant to be understood. It is the sequence of them that is meant to convey a meaning, and sometimes we forget this. It is not what is written that is of moment, but what we ourselves think when we have read what is written. Do you remember, it must be now five years ago, the meeting to which you took me, and at which X—— spoke, and my telling you

that he seemed to me the ablest speaker that I had heard in your country? You did not agree with me entirely, or thought you did not, for you replied that he always seemed to you just to miss saying what he should; and you illustrated what you meant, in answer to my question, by pointing out place after place in his address where your own thought had run on to some telling point, some important corollary or definite conclusion, which he might have drawn but did not. You were younger then than you are now, and had I smiled it might have hurt you. But neither you nor I had had those thoughts, had seen those telling points, before we listened to him. It was he who had given them to us, but so given them that it was easy for us to think them our own. That is the art of speech, and of writing. Not to make points, but to make other people make them; not to give your thought as yours, but to evoke it as his own in the mind of your reader.

I think, if you will look at the matter in this way, that you will see you have understood more than you admit. Had you not, I doubt whether you would have written me just such a letter as now lies before me, nor have quoted in it Christ's saying to Nicodemus: "No man hath ascended up to heaven but he that came down from heaven"; and I feel quite sure you would not else have coupled with this the passage from St. Augustine: "And I perceived myself to be far off from Thee, in the region of unlikeness, as if I heard this Thy voice from on high: 'I am the food of grown men; grow, and thou shalt feed upon Me; nor shalt thou convert Me, like the food of thy flesh, into thee, but thou shalt be converted into Me.'" For in these two quotations lie the sum and substance of that ancient story-teller's tale,—the very heart of his meaning that you say you "did not understand."

You do not want me to give you a philosophical discourse on the duality that is inherent in all manifestation. Look where we will, we still see matter and spirit conjoined. Yet we know that there is nothing in matter, as such, capable of evolving or producing spirit. As life is born only of life, so is spirit born only of spirit,—born in matter only through the incarnation of the spirit. The Incarnation is more than the central fact of human life. It is the central fact of cosmic life, as well. And it is these two aspects of the Incarnation, the human and the cosmic, that it seems to me this story of the youngest of the gods portrays. It is the self-giving of the spirit to matter,—the laying down of the life of the god, that it may rise again, lifting to its divine heritage all into which, in its death, it has entered. It is the story of Osiris, of the Christ,—the eternal drama of the spirit,—the gift to men and to the world of the seed of immortal life.

What is the spirit? For what do we pray when we pray that the Masters' life may live also in us? I cannot answer. Yet something of the answer each one of us can feel. It is a life that aspires ceaselessly to its source: an aspiration that is the motive power of all evolution: an undying hunger and thirst for the things that are its own. Can we not,

in thought, place ourselves beside Queen Nephthys in the vision of her swoon, and look back to what this world would be were mankind without this hunger of and for the spirit? As cattle we should be born and live and die, and nowhere would the gulf between heaven and earth be bridged. Only that which has come down from heaven can ascend to heaven; but as that ascends, it can draw with it all that it has made its own. In the hunger of our hearts is the life of the spirit, the life of the Master living in us. In that hunger itself is that for which we hunger.

It is hard for us to realize this. There are times when we seem to search in vain; when our prayers meet no return, when him to whom we pray seems infinitely remote, and our desire comes back baffled to itself. We suffer in such times as these. But could we keep our hold upon the truth we know, I think we should not suffer,—at least, not as we do now. For we should realize that in the very fact of our desire was the evidence of the Master's presence. Without him, we could not desire him. We know this, yet again and again we forget it, and "clamour at the gates of heaven against the faithful gods."

But there is more to the matter than this. Not only is the life of the Masters within us, it is within all about us. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights." This is the second, the cosmic aspect of the Incarnation. The inner world is within the outer, its soul and heart. Turn again to the Gita, and read once more what Krishna tells of himself to Arjuna. "I am taste in the waters, . . . I am light in moon and sun; . . . I am sound in the ether, and manhood in men. I am the sweet scent in the earth, I am the glow in fire; life and I in all beings, and fervour in men of fervour. Know Me as the everlasting seed of all beings, the thought of the thinking, the radiance of the radiant. . . . I am all-consuming Death; I am the birth of things that shall be; I am honour, grace, voice, among things feminine; and memory and wisdom, firmness, patience." We are not left without food for our hunger. The Master offers himself to us in everything we contact, in every circumstance and happening of our daily lives. At the heart of them all is his life, laid down and poured into them for us.

Why is it, then, that we still hunger? Or rather, since hunger is the very life of the soul, why do we still feel that we have found nothing on which that hunger can be fed? You have yourself answered that question in your quotation from St. Augustine: "Nor shalt thou convert Me, like the food of thy flesh, into thee, but thou shalt be converted into Me."

Tell me, Friend, how often do those whose souls hunger, and who deem they have no food, draw near to life's table with this thought in mind? When we find "manhood in men, honour, grace, voice, among things feminine, the sweet scent in the earth, and the glow in the fire," do we seek to give ourselves in them to the Master, to let them convert us into him? Or do we seek to seize them for ourselves, to

convert them, like the food of our flesh, into us? In them is his life, the food for our souls. What do we do with it?

We know the answer. Like the sparrow, we leave the grain and seize upon the straw, to build it into the nests we make for our own ease and pleasure. And, because we use it so, we do not see that even in the hollow of the straw the grain still lies,—the grain for which, even in our comfort, our souls hunger. All about us, in our homes, in our loves and fellowship, in our work and daily round of duty, in all that we have taken for ourselves, the Master has offered, and still offers us, himself. But to find him, we must seek him—seek *him,* and not ourselves, use his gifts to draw near to him, to be converted into him, and not to fatten self. And to make this change, to learn to use rightly that which we have used wrongly, to learn to see him where we have seen self, to learn to find the very thing we have,—it may be necessary that it should be taken from us. This, too, is the Master's gift to us. "I am all-consuming Death; I am the birth of things that shall be."

Is the parable of the sparrow still meaningless? Are the faithful gods, still unfaithful in your eyes? Or is this letter as obscure as was the tale on which it comments? If you think it is, remember X——'s address, and instead of looking to what is written, look to your own thoughts when you have read.

Believe me, as always,

Faithfully yours,

JOHN GERARD.

Thine own self-will and anxiety, thy hurry and labor, disturb thy peace, and prevent Me from working in thee. Look at the little flowers, in the serene summer days; they quietly open their petals, and the sun shines into them with his gentle influences. So will I do for thee, if thou wilt yield thyself to Me.—G. Fersteegen.

THE HOLY SPIRIT

X

The Self of Matter and the SELF *of Spirit can never meet. One of the twain must disappear; there is no place for both.*

Voice of the Silence, p. 13.

For narrow is the gate and straightened the way, that leadeth unto life, and few be they that find it.

St. Matthew, vii, 14.

Man tends to become A *God and then—God, like every other atom in the Universe.*

The Secret Doctrine, vol. I, p. 159.

A KABALISTIC axiom quoted in *Isis* (vol. I, p. 301, note) reads: "A stone becomes a plant; a plant, a beast; a beast, a *man;* a man, a *spirit;* and the spirit a god." The preceding study has developed, along the more familiar lines of Christian thought, the teaching about this next great step in man's evolution,—his rebirth a new creature—a self-conscious Spirit—into the world of Spirit. The term Holy Spirit has been seen to bear this specific meaning; and out of the writings of St. Paul and of earlier Hebrew tradition have been culled references that concerned directly the achievement of this new birth.

But the term Holy Spirit in more modern Christian writings, and especially as familiar in the current thought and creeds of today, is rather a metaphysical term, connotating a universal principle, and but very dimly connected with anything other than the most general operations in the individual human being. Theology recognizes to a certain extent that a discrepancy exists between early Christian teaching about the Spirit in man, and its own vague speculations and theories; but its method of reconciliation is to explain away St. Paul and early tradition entirely.

Now the reason for this confusion of ideas about the Holy Spirit—the inclusion in this one term of both a metaphysic and a more or less specific process or step of man's evolution,—is hinted at by Madame Blavatsky in the third of the italicised opening sentences. To make this a little clearer, compare with it another sentence, also in *The Secret Doctrine*. "There is naught higher than man in the Universe: everything has been, is, or tends, to become man."

If this be so, man's evolution will not stop even at the rebirth into the new world; and spiritual man will take his place among those higher orders of beings about which Christianity so far knows so little, but about which *The Secret Doctrine* has again afforded some hints, withheld heretofore in this cycle.

We have already seen that Christ in his "mystical body" has an immediate and close connection with the nascence, the upbuilding, the whole life of the Spirit in man. The identification is so close that the two words Spirit and Christ (*Χρίστος*) are interchangeable throughout St. Paul. Beyond pointing out this fact no detailed explanation has so far been offered. But when we try to interpret the Gospel accounts of Christ's life, his recorded utterances about the Spirit, and the manifestations of the Spirit in certain critical events in his life, some attempt at an explanation becomes essential or else the significance of his revelation is entirely lost. In fact, it is the loss of any really spiritual understanding of Christ's incarnation that is so sad a feature of present-day Christianity. The interpretation put today upon the life of the Galilean Master, based as it is almost exclusively upon its merely human aspect, and without any insight into his mystical life, has become so narrow and fixed, that Christian belief has even built up a crystalized orthodox code explaining those events, such as the Virgin Birth or the Transfiguration, that are avowedly transcendental, and, like the first aphorisms of *Light on the Path,* have "remained sealed as to their inner meaning." The Church has agreed on an orthodox statement of its ignorance, so to speak; and while acknowledging a mystery, it has surrounded the mystery with an interpretation suitable to its own ideas of what should or must be.

But complete explanation there is; and Madame Blavatsky, without actually stating what in itself is inexplicable in terms of an intellect untrained and unenlightened by the experience of the religious life, has in a multitude of ways sought to demonstrate the rational and philosophical necessity for at least assuming the existence and recognizing the *genre* of this spiritual life. She has dealt specifically with Christ's mystical life, not only in *Isis, The Secret Doctrine,* and the *Glossary,* but also in repeated allusions throughout her writings. Especially to be recommended are her notes to G. R. S. Mead's translation of the Gnostic *Pistis Sophia,*[1] and a very valuable series of articles on "The Esoteric Character of the Gospels."[2]

The life of Christ may be looked at in two ways. The Master's words and actions may be taken as our ideal, as an example of how we should act, or should hope to be able to act some day;—and we derive as much inspiration from considering his life in this way as we put hearty devotion into our study. We may likewise derive inspiration from the biographies of mystics, saints, and disciples of every age,—who have proclaimed their rebirth and demonstrated with varying completeness the realization on earth of the higher life of the Spirit. But Jesus' life was more than this; he was more than the incarnation of a Master; he was an Avatar, a special Divine Incarnation, whose mission it was and is to act for this race at once as ideal prototype,

[1] *Lucifer,* Vol. VI, April, 1890, *et seq.*
[2] *Ibid,* Vol. I, November, 1887, *et seq.*

and as initiator into the "mysteries of the kingdom of heaven." Jesus Christ was a human man; that is, he was all that we should and ought to become, for "as many as received him, to them he gave power to become the sons of God [children of God], even to them that believe on his Name";[1] to which Paul adds, "For as many as are guided by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." But Jesus Christ was also the Logos, one person of the Trinity; and it is the mystery of this dual nature that stands backs of all the Church's complicated and misconceived theories about the Trinity, and what is known as scholastic metaphysics.

The study of the doctrine of Avatars is extremely complex and difficult, but certain phases of it bear direct relation to our subject. The Virgin Birth cannot be understood without it. And as the very first verse of *St. Matthew,* after the genealogies, tells us that, "Now the generation of the Christos[2] was in this wise: when his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found with child *of the Holy Spirit,"*—it would seem that this problem might as well be faced now as later. Mr. Johnston in the October QUARTERLY of volume IX, p. 218, discusses the Virgin Birth as "really an integral part of a much wider doctrine, a doctrine fundamental to all religion: the doctrine of the Incarnation of the Divine Man." He gives as illustrations of the universality of this belief parallel narratives from other great religions,—to which might be added the comparisons between Hindu, Egyptian, and Christian Virgin-Birth litanies cited by Madame Blavatsky in *Isis* (Vol. II, p. 209ff). The latter in the *Glossary* emphasizes this idea in a paragraph on "Incarnations (*Divine*) or *Avatars.*" "The Immaculate Conception is as pre-eminently Egyptian as it is Indian. As the author of *Egyptian Belief* has it: 'It is not the vulgar, coarse, and sensual story of the Greek mythology, but refined, moral, and spiritual'; and again the incarnation idea was found revealed on the wall of the Theban temple by Samuel Sharp, who thus analyses it: 'First the god Thoth . . . as the messenger of the gods, like the Mercury of the Greeks (or the Gabriel of the first *Gospel*) tells the *maiden* queen Mautmes, that she is to give birth to a son, who is to be king Amunotaph III. Secondly, the god Kneph,[3] the Spirit . . . and the goddess Hathor (Nature) . . . both take hold of the queen by the hands and put into her mouth the character for life, a *cross,* which is to be the life of the coming child,' etc., etc. Truly divine incarnation, or the *avatar* doctrine, constituted the grandest mystery of every old

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[1] *St. John,* i, 12; and *Romans,* viii, 14.

[2] The usual translation is "of Jesus Christ." But the Greek text, "presumed to underlie the Authorized Version" by the Revisers, does not contain the word *Ιησοῦ*,—although the latter keep the phrase "Jesus Christ" in their own translation, merely noting the omission of "Jesus" as a possible variant. Neither the A. V. nor the R. V. had any criterion by which to establish such renditions other than textual criticism. I have chosen the above translation to conform with my own interpretation of what the Gospel writer himself meant, which is based on the results of this whole study. *Cf.* Section IX; and also the subsequent discussion.

[3] *Cf.* back Section VII, p. 32. Kneph is identified with the Logos by Eusebius, etc.

religious system!" H. P. B. also says under "Avatar,"—"There are two kinds of avatars: those born from woman, and the parentless, the *anupapadaka.*" [1] The Galilean Master was one of the former, in recognition of which he is called "the Christos" by St. Matthew.

The distinction of meaning between the man Jesus, and "the Christos" has been utterly lost by the Church. In the ancient mysteries, long ante-dating Christianity, there were two well recognized terms, Chrestos, and Christos. Madame Blavatsky spends twenty out of fifty-seven pages in comment and elucidation upon the use of these terms in *Lucifer,* showing the importance she attached to them. "In Bockh's 'Christian Inscriptions,' numbering 1,*287*, there is no single instance of an earlier date than the third century, wherein the name is not written *Chrest* or *Chreist*" cites H. P. B. (p. 308) from G. Massey's article in "The Agnostic Annual" on *The Name and Nature of the Christ.* Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Lactantius, Clement of Alexandria, and others spelt it in this way; while Lactantius (A. D. 260-330) says of the name Christ (*Χρίστος*) that it "is not a proper name, but a title of power and dominion; for by this name the Jews were accustomed to call their kings, . . . on this account we call Him Christ, that is, the Anointed, who in Hebrew is called Messias. Hence in some Greek writings, which are badly interpreted from the Hebrew the word *ἠλειμμένος* is found written, from the word *ἀλείφεσθαι,* anointing. But, however, by either name a king is signified: not that He has obtained this earthly kingdom, the time for receiving which has not yet arrived, but that He sways a heavenly and eternal kingdom." [2]

On these names, H. P. B. further says: "Christos is the crown of glory of the suffering Chréstos of the mysteries, as of the candidate for the final UNION, of whatever race or creed"; and again, "One has *to die in Chrestos, i. e.,* kill one's personality and its passions, to blot out every idea of separateness with one's 'Father,' the Divine Spirit in man; to become one with the eternal and absolute *Life* and *Light* (SAT) before one can reach the glorious state of *Christos,* the regenerate man, the man in spiritual freedom." [3] Perhaps one long and condensed quotation from the *Glossary* under "Chrestos," will sufficiently outline what is meant by this distinction, or difference, of use. Madame Blavatsky calls Chrestos "The early Gnostic form of Christ. It was used in the fifth century B. C. by Æschylus, Herodotus, and others. The *Manteumata pythochresta,* or the 'oracles delivered by a Pythian God' through the pythoness, are mentioned by the former (Choep. 901). *Chrésterion* is not only 'the seat of the oracle,' but an offering to, or for, the oracle. *Chréstos* is one who explains oracles, 'a prophet and soothsayer,' and *Chrésterios* one who serves an oracle or a god. The

[1] *Vide Secret Doctrine,* Vol. 1, first one hundred and forty pages, for repeated reference to the anupadaka.

[2] *The Divine Institutes,* Bk. IV, Cap. vii. *The Ante-Nicene Fathers,* Vol. VII, p. 106.

[3] "Esoteric Character of the Gospels," *Lucifer,* Vol. I, pages 309, and 308, second note.

earliest Christian writer, Justin Martyr, in his first *Apology,* calls his co-religionists *Chréstians.*[1] 'It is only through ignorance that men call themselves Christians instead of *Chréstians,*' says Lactantius (lib. iv, cap. vii).[2] The terms Christ and Christians, spelt originally *Chrést* and *Chréstians,* were borrowed from the Temple vocabulary of the Pagans. *Chréstos* meant in that vocabulary a disciple on probation, a candidate for hierophantship. When he had attained to this through initiation, long trials, and suffering, and had been *'anointed'* (*i. e.,* 'rubbed with oil,' as were Initiates and even idols of the gods, as the last touch of ritualistic observance), his name was changed into *Christos,* the 'purified,' in esoteric or mystery language. In mystic symbology, indeed, Christés, or Christos, meant that the 'Way,' the *Path,* was already trodden and the goal reached, when the fruits of the arduous labour, uniting the personality of evanescent clay with the indestructible INDIVIDUALITY, transformed it thereby into the immortal EGO. 'At the end of the *Way* stands the Chréstés,' the *Purifier,* and the union once accomplished, the Chrestos, the 'man of sorrow,' became *Christos* himself. Paul, the Initiate, knew this, and meant this precisely, when he is made to say, in bad translation: 'I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you' (*Gal.* iv, 19), the true rendering of which is . . . 'until ye form the Christos within yourselves.' But the profane who knew only that Chréstés was in some way connected with priest and prophet, and knew nothing about the hidden meaning of Christos, insisted, as did Lactantius and Justin Martyr, on being called *Chréstians* instead of Christians. Every good individual, therefore, may find Christ in his 'inner man' as Paul expresses it (*Ephes.* iii, 16, 17), whether he be Jew, Mussulman, Hindu or Christian. Kenneth Mackenzie seemed to think that the word *Chréstos* was a synonym for *Soter,* 'an appellation addressed to deities, great kings and heroes,' indicating 'Saviour,'—and he was right. For, as he adds: 'It has been applied abundantly to Jesus Christ, whose name Jesus or Joshua bears the same interpretation. The name Jesus, in fact, is rather a title of honour than a name—the true name of the Soter of Christianity being Emmanuel, or God with us (*Matt.* i, 23).'"

The incarnation of an Avatar, of a fully developed or achieved Christos, is connected in all religions with a Virgin Birth. The modern dogma, as Mr. Johnston suggests, can be seen to rest "on a misunderstanding, a materialization of a spiritual truth." Marcion, a Gnostic

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[1] *Opus cit.* Cap. IV. The translators in the *Ante-Nicene Fathers* completely misapprehend and mistranslate this chapter. The following note speaks for itself. "Justin avails himself here of the similarity of sound of the words *Χριστὸς* (Christ) and *χρηστὸς* (good, worthy excellent). The play upon these words is kept up throughout this paragraph, and cannot be always represented to the English reader. [But Justin was merely quoting and using, *ad hominem,* the popular blunder of which Suetonius (*Life of Claudius,* Cap. 25) gives us an example 'impulsore *Chresto.*' It will be observed again in others of these Fathers]." The last sentence in square brackets is the additional note of the American editor of this Series, the Rev. Dr. A. C. Coxe.

[2] This is a very free rendering of the text, to say the least.

"heretic," contemporary with Justin, maintained similarly that orthodox Christianity was simply a *"carnalization* of metaphysical allegories and symbolism, and a degradation of the true spiritual idea." Along with other Gnostics he accused the Church Fathers, as Irenæus himself complains, of "framing their [orthodox] doctrine according to the capacity of their hearers, fabling blind things for the blind, according to their blindness; for the dull, according to their dullness; for those in error according to their errors."

The symbology of the Virgin Birth may be regarded in two ways. It is an allegory of a metaphysical fact in the Universe, and it corresponds with the birth of the Divine or Heavenly Man in us at our second birth. The correspondence, again, with the Christ, is made in one sentence by Madame Blavatsky: "The 'Heavenly Man'—please mark again the word—is the 'Logos' or the 'Son' esoterically." Philo makes the same interrelation, for the Logos is the image of God, and man is the image of the Logos, "Hence the Logos is the Mediator, the Heavenly Man." St. John says (i, 14) "and the Logos became flesh, and dwelt [literally "tabernacled"] among us (and we beheld his glory, glory as of an only begotten from a Father), full of grace and truth."

These statements of Philo and St. John round out the long series of prophetic utterances with reference to the Messiah. Christian doctrine follows the Hebrew tradition in grounding the necessity for the coming of the Messiah on the "fall" of man. This fall, allegorically set forth in *Genesis,* is a figure for that process in the evolution of humanity, where the spiritual man fell into incarnation in physical life. Adam, representing generically the whole human race, "fell" from his original state of mindless and self-consciousless innocence by eating of the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil. Man as a pure spiritual being can only become self-conscious through experience of "good and evil," that is, through a descent into matter and physical life, passing through the lower planes of cosmic life and consciousness, and finally, by receiving mind, becoming able to see himself reflected in the personality he has forged in the phenomenal world of manifestation. "For as in Adam all die, so also in the Christos shall all be made alive." "If the Christos hath not been raised, then is our preaching vain." "He who aroused the Christos from the dead will raise (quicken) also your mortal bodies." [1]

In the older philosophies, in the Egyptian ritual and the Hindu system, the nature and symbolism of the trinity, though using an anthropomorphic conception and human relationships to set forth divine mysteries, yet escapes the danger into which the Christian dogmatists fell. With the latter the symbolism of the Jewish tradition as well as of all Virgin Birth allegories, is altogether forgotten, and hopelessly degraded by making the *divine Son* the physiological offspring of a human virgin. St. Thomas Aquinas curiously reflects traces of the

[1] *I. Cor.* xv, 22, 14, *Rom.* viii, 11.

real mystery teaching and tradition, which perhaps he got from fragments still surviving in the earlier Fathers, but most likely from his own inner consciousness, though in an obscured way through the almost unyielding scholastic thought-moulds. His desire in all ways that Christ should be absolutely pure in body and soul was in essence a recognition of the purity necessary for the second birth, for the incarnation of the Heavenly Man. He says: "This indeed was befitting for three reasons. First, because this was in keeping with a property of Him whose Birth is in question, for He is the Logos (Verbum) of God. For the word is not only conceived in the mind without corruption, but also proceeds from the mind without corruption. Wherefore in order to show that body to be the body of the very Word of God, it was fitting that it should be born of a virgin incorrupt."[1] If we compare this with a verse in the *Voice of the Silence,* the fundamental truth can be seen even through St. Thomas' "materialization." "Before that path is entered, thou must destroy thy lunar body [the *Kama-rupa*], cleanse thy mind-body [the *Manasa-rupa*], and make clean thy heart. . . . Let not thy 'Heaven-Born,' merged in the sea of Maya, break from the Universal Parent (Soul), but let the fiery power retire into the inmost chamber, the chamber of the Heart, and the abode of the World's Mother." The note adds: "The 'fiery power' is Kundalini. The 'Power' and the 'World-Mother' are names given to Kundalini—one of the mystic 'Yogî powers.' It is Buddhi considered as an active instead of a passive principle (which it is generally, when regarded only as the vehicle or casket of the Supreme Spirit *Atma* [and when it is a *feminine* principle]). It is an electro-spiritual force, a creative power which when aroused into action can as easily kill as it can create."[2]

St. Thomas further recognized that Christ's birth was to prefigure that which we in turn must go through. He says, as a reason "that Christ should be born of a virgin"—"Fourthly, on account of the very end of the Incarnation of Christ, which was that men might be born again as sons of God, *not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God* (*John* i, 13)—*i. e.,* of the power of God—of which fact the very conception of Christ was to appear as an examplar."[3]

Traces of these indistinct echoes of the truth are to be found throughout even the orthodox Church writers, which shows that religious experience is the same, quite regardless of what men think about it, or think it ought to be. Tatian, an Assyrian Christian living approximately A. D. 110-172, of the school of Justin and Irenæus, tells us, for instance: "And as the Logos, begotten in the beginning, begot in turn our world, having first created for himself the necessary matter, so also I, in imitation of the Logos, being begotten again, and having become possessed of the truth, am trying to reduce to order the confused matter

[1] *Summa,* III-II, Ques. XXVIII, Art. 2.
[2] *Opus cit,* pps. 11 and 9.
[3] *Summa,* III-II, Ques. XXVIII, Art. I.

which is of a kindred spirit, with myself. . . . For the heavenly Logos, a spirit emanating from the Father, and a Logos from the Logos-power [Kundalini?] in imitation of the Father who begot Him, made man an image of immortality, so that, as incorruption is with God, in like manner, man, sharing in a part of God, might have the immortal principle also." [1] To show that Tatian knew what he was writing about, we quote the first sentence of chapter XII, which serves merely as an introduction to a lengthly discussion, but which will also act as a link with his more important concluding remarks on the "Necessity of a union with the Holy Spirit" (Chap. xv). "We recognize two varieties of spirit, one of which is called the soul (ψυχή), but the other is greater than the soul, an image and likeness of God. . . ." Then, further on (Chap. xiii) he says, "For the soul does not preserve the spirit, but is preserved by it, and the light comprehends the darkness. The Logos, in truth, is the light of God,—but the ignorant soul is darkness. On this account, if it [the soul] continues solitary, it tends downwards towards matter, and dies with the flesh; but if it enters into union with the Divine Spirit, it is no longer helpless, but ascends to the regions whither the Spirit guides it: for the dwelling place of the Spirit is above, but the origin of the soul is from beneath. Now, in the beginning the Spirit was a constant companion of the soul, but the Spirit forsook it because it was not willing to follow. . . . But the Spirit of God is not with all, but, taking up its abode with those who live justly, and intimately combining with the soul, by prophecies it announced hidden things to other souls."

In some very ancient *Hymns On The Nativity* probably written by an oriental, one Ephraim Syrus, about 350 A. D., we find, besides some obscure sun and moon symbology, these verses:

> The two things thou soughtest, in Thy Birth have been done for us.
> Our visible body Thou hast put on; Thy invisible might we have put on:
> Our body has become Thy clothing; Thy Spirit has become our robe.[2]

These two examples, taken almost by chance, reveal the fact that Christianity has in its own possession the clues to its lost wisdom, if it have but the "ears to hear."

In closing a word remains to be said about the Christian Trinity in comparison with other conceptions, which will perhaps throw a little further light on the Virgin Birth.

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[1] Tatian, *Address to the Greeks,* in Chaps. V and VII. Vol. II of the *Ante-Nicene Fathers,* p. 66.

[2] *Opus cit.* XV, v. 39. *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series,* Vol. XIII., p. 255.

In Christian theology the trinity consists of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, but in all other trinities it is Father-Mother-Son. In the Christian trinity there is no female principle; and to suit the exigencies of the case the Son is made the second person instead of the third, while the Mother of Christ is raised to the position of Mother of God, introducing practically a fourth element. In *The Secret Doctrine* Father-Mother are the dual aspect of Spirit and Matter. It is the infinite co-operation of these which produces the third aspect, the divine "Son"; or more simply the manifested universe. Now "Father" and "Spirit" are often symbolized by fire or by light; and "Matter" or "Mother" are symbolized by "water" or the "deep." "Darkness radiates Light, and Light drops one solitary ray into Mother-Deep" (*Book of Dzyan*).

This is exactly the same symbolism as found in the first chapter of *Genesis:* "Darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be Light." Here the "deep" and the "waters" are synonymous, and are the female principle, the "Mother-Deep"; while the "Spirit" is the "Father."

With the birth of Jesus we get an exact parallel. Mary is *Mare,* the sea; representing again the "waters," or the "deep." She is "found with child of the Holy Spirit" (*St. Matt.* i, 18);—and in *Acts* ii, 3, we find that fire is the symbol for the Holy Spirit. The "Father" of Jesus is then the Holy Spirit; and we find that this agrees with this use of the term Father throughout (*vide* next section). Mary may further be identified with the Hindu *Maya,* the Chaldean Mar-Ri, and the Egyptian Isis. But such identifications might be carried on almost indefinitely.

Jesus Christ, then, is first the man Jesus, perfect as man; and then he is the Christos, our divine Prototype, the Heavenly Man, an Avatar. His life is the perfect life of the Spirit, because one with the Logos, the "Son," "who is the image of the invisible God, the first born of all creation [spiritual as well as material]; for in him were all things created, in the heavens, and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities, or powers, all things have been created through him, and unto him; and he is before all things, and in him all things consist" (*Col.* i, 15-18).

JOHN BLAKE, JR.

(*To be continued*)

There are no disappointments to those whose wills are buried in the will of God.—F. W. Faber.

MEN OF THE OLD STONE AGE*

HOW old is man? This is a matter of such perennial interest to that curiosity which is, and always has been, one of the strongest motive powers of human action, that Prof. Henry Fairfield Osborne's book, though a ponderous volume, full of illustrations, tables and cuts, written for scientists, and costing $5.00, has, within about a year, passed through two editions. It has been very extensively reviewed; Mr. Roosevelt, among many others, having written a special and very commendatory article upon it.

From the standpoint of the Theosophist, scientific speculations about man's origin and antiquity are always correlated with what Madame Blavatsky wrote in *The Secret Doctrine,* and a review of such a work, in our magazine, would properly be a comparison between the latest views of science and such revelations of the secret doctrine as have been given us. This is not easy, for neither the speculations of science nor the revelations of the secret doctrine, are clear cut and definite, and this initial confusion is increased by the fundamental difference between the two points of view.

Science is only beginning to throw off the shackles of orthodox theology which taught for centuries, that the world was created some 4004 years B. C. While considering this fantasy of the past as too puerile to be worthy even of denial, it is curious and interesting to observe that science is still swayed, unconsciously, by the mental bias in favor of *short* periods of time, which is the result of centuries of thinking along such lines. This is carried to such an extent that scientific men have an instinctive bias against anyone, even of their own number, who announces opinions contrary to this general drift. The constrictive power of this inherited influence will have to wear away, and scholars will have to learn to think in terms of millions of years instead of in terms of tens of thousands of years before their speculations can hope to approach the truth.

Geologists and certain schools of evolutionists are less imbued with "short time" theories than other branches of science, for the very simple reason that enormous periods of time are obviously required to explain the observed facts of their science; so we occasionally unearth the truly ridiculous situation of a paleontologist, say, who finds a fossil in a certain strata which gealogists say is 100,000,000 years old, and who would rather dispute the accuracy of the geology than acknowledge that his bone could be so old. He knows of no reason why it should not be, save that it is not according to the trend of thought.

I think the first impression one gets from reading Prof. Osborne's book is the extraordinarily small amount of data which they have upon

* Published by *Scribners.*

which to base their opinions. "In more than ninety years of exploration, only *three* skeletal relics of man, have been found in the ancient 'river drifts'; these are the 'Trinil,' the 'Heidelberg,' and the 'Piltdown.'" And in these three cases what did they find? A Dutch Army Surgeon, Dubois, excavating for fossils in the Bergawan River in central Java, found a molar tooth in a deposit of numerous mammal bones. A meter away he found the top of a skull. At the close of the rainy season, he found another molar tooth and a left thigh bone about 15 meters from the spot where the skull was found. That is all! But upon those two molar teeth, and a bit of skull and a left thigh bone, modern science has constructed a prehuman race, a half man, half ape species, known as the Trinil Race of Java. One cannot help but admire the extraordinary learning, industry and ingenuity which are shown by the students who can concoct a whole race from such remains and get sensible people to give serious attention to their conclusions.

I do not know whether such a race as the Trinil Race of Java ever lived or not. From the Theosophical standpoint it would have none of the significance which it has for science for the very simple reason that Theosophists believe that races in different stages of evolution inhabit different parts of the earth, and even the same parts of the earth, at the same time. This perfectly simple—indeed, in view of what we see under our noses in the present day, it seems fair to say, this perfectly obvious,—idea never seems to have penetrated the intellects of the most learned scientists. They one and all take for granted that in prehistoric times, the earth was peopled at the different times, by the primitive peoples of which they find these scant remains, and by no one else. This has caused them to face some very strange and inconsistent facts which they make no attempt to explain. For instance, the neolithic man of Europe was cannibalistic; the paleolithic man of Europe, who lived ages before, was not; and yet, according to their theory, man has gradually evolved from a lower to a higher type. Again, everyone has heard of the drawings of prehistoric animals, many of them of extinct species, which have been found on the walls of the cave dwellings of these early people. It is not so generally known that some of the best of these (and the best are very good drawings, indeed, better than you or I could do, unless we happen to be trained artists), are not by the later, but by the earlier, the much earlier, races.*

To some extent the same objections, or inconsistencies show through the size and shape of skulls, which is one of the standards used by science to estimate the point on the scale of evolution reached by a given specimen. On the theory that we are descended, either from monkeys, or that we and the monkeys are both descended from a common, but now extinct ancestor, science measures the degree of progress upward, by how nearly a skull approaches in contour and character to the skull of

* Many of these prehistoric drawings are reproduced in Prof. Osborne's book, and some readers might miss the bit of humor on the title page of the volume where the name of the illustrators are given, including the "upper palaeolithic artists"!

an ape, or to the typical skull of the modern Western man—the *Homo Sapiens*. It is not a very satisfactory theory even to science, and still less so to skeptical Theosophists, who want to know whether the three famous Trinil, Piltdown and Heidelberg skulls were average skulls, or whether they happened to be unusual. We can find typical Trinil, Piltdown and Heidelberg skulls, at the present moment, walking and working around New York City. They are not the average, it is true, but we can find the essential characteristics of each type.

Furthermore, the leading authorities differ in their reconstruction of these pieces of skulls; and, it should be pointed out, several savants point-blank deny that the piece of skull, and the molar teeth and the left thigh bone of the Trinil discovery, have anything to do with each other. They say, with many learned arguments to back up their opinions, that these relics belonged to two or three different animals, and they even hazard the guess as to what the animals were! The Piltdown and Heidelberg skulls are also both fragments of skulls only.

Other skeletal remains of primitive man have been found, but in caves and places where there were no geological or other reasonably sure guide to determine their age. That is the reason why the Trinil, Piltdown and Heidelberg relics are so famous. Efforts are, of course, made to identify one or another of these remains, which can be approximately dated, with other groups of remains, and some of the most profound researches and ingenious and convincing work of modern science has been done in this direction. One has nothing but admiration and respect for the painstaking and exhaustive study which these subjects have been given, even if one fails to agree with the conclusions.

In addition to the actual bones of primitive man, he left much more abundant evidences of his existence in his words. Europe especially, perhaps because more carefully explored, is full of deposits of flints and implements of one kind or another, or of the drawings on cave walls, or remains of dwellings, like the Lake Dwellers of Switzerland. Many of these can be given approximate dates, and for this purpose all the resources of geology, paleontology, anthropology, archæology, geography, meteorology, climatology, and zoology, as well as kindred sciences, are called upon. A prodigious learning is a necessary equipment before one is qualified to investigate this subject, and one thing that makes Prof. Osborne's book remarkable is that he has drawn together the most recent contributions of all these sciences to the age of man.

It would be a fascinating task to try to show, however briefly, how each of these special methods of investigation is made to yield its quota to the final result, but space and time forbid, besides which, Prof. Osborne has already done it, and those who are sufficiently interested can read about it there. I want to refer to a few of the more remarkable things, and I want to perform what I regard as a real service.

To begin with this latter: I have found in what little reading I have done on this subject, a hopeless confusion and tangle of unfamiliar names.

We have all heard of the Stone Age, and a sentence will begin about the man of this age; a few words later, he is called paleolithic, and by the time we have correlated those ideas, we are confused by a reference to the Ice Age, then confounded by some reference to the Pleistocene Age, condemned by a casual remark about the Quarternary Age, utterly cast down by having our man called Aurignacian, and we wonder where in Heaven's name we are at when the sentence ends, by stating that all this conclusively proves that the Neanderthal man lived 100,000 years ago.

The not very simple explanation is that each of the several sciences mentioned above has its own nomenclature, and a man like Prof. Osborne, who knows them all, is careless in his use of terms. He will refer to Pleistocene man (geological term), then to the same fellow as living in the Stone Age (zoological term), then as a Paleolithic man (anthropological term), then as Aurignacian man (archæological term), then as a Neanderthal man (palæontological term), and all the while he means the same thing, although no one would suspect it. So I have prepared a table which shows the parallels, so far as they can be indicated, and at the same time I have put in the approximate time in years which the consensus of opinion gives to the various periods. It is interesting to point out at once that *The Secret Doctrine* substantially agrees with the ages given by science to the geological periods. It is only man's place in them that is a matter of complete disagreement.

Prof. Osborne is essentially a "short term" scholar, and in common with his school, places the entire evolution of man during the half million years of the Pleistocene Epoch, and expresses the positive opinion that even in late Pliocene times man had only reached a stage similar to the pre-human Trinil race of Java. Worse than this, he thinks human beings sufficiently evolved to make the simplest implements are not over 125,000 years old, and that really modern men, with instincts and impulses like our own, date from about 25,000 years ago. Other students, equally entitled to our consideration, including Dr. A. Smith Woodward who took a leading part in the discovery of the Piltdown race, put man back into early Pleistocene times, thus giving him an age of from 500,000 to 1,000,000 years. To show how complicated the question is, and how much room for an honest difference of opinion there can be, we first have the geological question of the age of the gravel bed where the Piltdown skull was found. There is lack of agreement about this. Then, on top of this, comes the question of the age of the worked flints and other man made relics found in the same gravel bed. Opinions differ, but even the "short time" school concede a great antiquity to them. Then come the data obtained from the remains of animals found near the skull. Some of these are extinct animals who ceased to exist a very long, but an unknown time ago. Opinions differ about this. Opinions also differ, as in the case of the Trinil skull, whether certain important fragments of bone found near the large piece of skull, really belong to

ZOOLOGICAL	CHRONOLOGICAL	GEOLOGICAL	ANTHROPOLOGICAL	ARCHEOLOGICAL	PALÆONTOLOGICAL	NOTES FROM "SECRET DOCTRINE"
PRIMORDIAL EOZOIC OR AZOIC ARCHEAN AGE (LIFELESS)	171,200,000 YEARS	LAURENTIAN CAMBRIAN SILURIAN (OLDEST FOSSILS FOUND HERE)				FIRST SECOND AND HALF OF THIRD RACE TOOK 200,000,000 YEARS TO EVOLVE
PRIMARY OR PALÆOZOIC AGE (ANCIENT LIFE)	103,040,000 YEARS	DEVONIAN COAL PERMIAN				
SECONDARY OR MESOZOIC AGE (MIDDLE LIFE)	36,800,000 YEARS.	TRIASSAC JURASSIC CRETACEOUS (AGE OF REPTILES)				THIRD RACE APPEARED IN JURASSIC AGE BONE MAN APPEARED 18,000,000 YEARS AGO. EUROPE ROSE 10,000,000 YEARS AGO FOURTH ROOT RACE BEGAN 4,000,000 YEARS AGO
TERTIARY OR CAINOZOIC AGE (RECENT LIFE)	7,360,000 YEARS	EOCENE MIOCENE PLIOCENE (AGE OF MAMMALS & MODERN PLANTS)	EOLITHIC			
	1,6000,000 YEARS	PLEISTOCENE (DAWN OF MIND ART & INDUSTRY)		PRE-CHÉLLÉAN CHELLEAN ACHEULEAN MONSTRIAN AURIGNACIAN SOLUTREAN MAGDALENIAN AZILIAN OR TARDENOISSIAN		FIFTH ROOT RACE BEGAN 1,000,000 YEARS AGO.
		OR				
	520,000 TO 840,000 YEARS	ICE AGE	OLD STONE AGE — PALÆOLITHIC		TRINIL RACE 475,000 YEARS OLD HEIDELBERG RACE 375,000 YEARS OLD PILTDOWN RACE 150,000 YEARS OLD NEANDERTHAL RACE 50,000 YEARS OLD PRO-MAGNON OR BRINN RACE 25000 YEARS OLD	
QUARTERNARY AGE.	100,000 YEARS	POSTGLACIAL (EXTINCTION OF GREAT MAMMALS NEW STONE AGE)	NEOLITHIC	CAMPIGNIAN SWISS LAKE DWELLERS		
	5000 TO 10,000 YEARS	AGE OF BRONZE		HALSTATT LA TÈNE		
	4000 TO 6,000 YEARS.	HOLOCENE (IRON AGE OR AGE OF MAN)				
	2000 TO 4,000 YEARS					

the skull, or to some other animal. So we can see how obscure is the whole subject, how doubtful the guesses as to the real age of the remains.

But more important still from the point of view of the Theosophist is the belief that nothing very significant would be proved, if the age of the skull could be accurately determined. True, we should know when the Piltdown man lived; but we should not know whether he was typical of his period; whether he represented the highest or the lowest kind of men who lived in his age; whether he was the degenerate remnant of an old and worn out race, or the primitive precursor of a race on the upward swing of the tide. The age of that skull really proves nothing but the age of that skull. The whole tendency of science to people the ancient world with primitive races, and only with these primitive races, does not seem to be justified by the very meagre facts which are all the western student has to go upon. One hundred thousand or 500,000 years from now, our present civilization will have been scraped off the face of the earth by repeated glacial ages. If by any chance the scientist of that remote time should come across a human relic of this age, it is more probable that he would find the thick and massive skull of some southern negro, preserved in the swamps where he lived and died, or the bones of a red Indian sheltered from the destructive effects of time by the lime-bearing waters of the cave where he was buried, than the highly developed and more perishable remains of the highest type of our civilization, which are nearly always buried where they would be most exposed to the action of the elements, or the even more destructive hand of man. Only a few of the most elaborately protected bodies of the ancient Egyptian Kings, placed in ponderous granite sarcophaguses and in specially excavated caves running half a mile into the heart of solid mountains, have come down to us. These 3,000 or 4,000 years, without any intervening Ice Age, have been sufficient to dispose of most of them. Another 5,000 years and all of them will have disappeared.

Madame Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine,* discusses many of these problems at considerable length, but she is not able to reconcile the theories of science with the teachings of the East. Consequently we are forced to contrast scientific theory, not with other theories, supported by data which would be recognized by science, but with dogmatic assertion, based solely upon occult tradition. According to her, man as the complete organic being he now is, dates from middle Atlantean times and is several million years old. She says the main Atlantean Continent perished several million years ago in Miocene times. The last great Atlantean Island went down in the late Pliocene age, about 850,000 years ago, after which there was no great submergence until the remnant of Atlantis, the Island mentioned by Plato, disappeared 11,000 years ago. On the other hand, the general consensus of scientific theory and hypothesis is to give what we may call fully developed man an age that varies from 25,000 to 125,000 years, and primitive man an age of 850,000 years. A few evolutionists contend, with considerable force, that

very much longer periods than these are required by the observed facts of their science, but they are in a minority and the other sciences are inclined to ignore these claims. Some evolutionists say that it must have taken at least 20,000,000 years for man to have evolved from his remote animal ancestor; that the slow processes of evolution could not have produced such a variation in a less period of time.

As already stated there is a much greater agreement between science and *The Secret Doctrine* as to the age of the world than there is about the age of man. Indeed in speculating about the age of the world some scientists have gone beyond the extreme limits suggested by the Eastern tradition. One modern geologist calculated that it would take 648 million years for certain sedimentary rocks to be deposited. Others speak of 500 million years as necessary, but sufficient, to account for all known facts. These estimates are made in several different ways and check each other fairly well, although several favorite methods of calculation, having to do with the length of time it would take the world to cool off, or the probable heat and age of the sun and the time such an incandescent mass would arrive at its present temperature, have been entirely upset by the very resent discoveries of radium and its properties.

The table on page 229 gives as close a correlation of the length of the different geological epochs, from the point of view of science and *The Secret Doctrine,* as it is possible to make. To this may be added certain general and a few specific statements. Madame Blavatsky says that the First, Second and half of the Third Race took about 300,000,000 years to evolve. The Third Race appeared in the middle of the Jurassic or Reptilian Age. Our table shows this to have been about 36,000,000 years ago. Of course it must be understood that these early Races were not physical human beings like ourselves, so there was no difficulty about their living on an earth still hot, or still a vast morass, peopled only with the gigantic reptiles of which we have some few astonishing remains. It was not until the middle of the Third Race that man took to himself a physical body, and it was still many millions of years before that body took on any semblance of modern human shape. Lemuria, the continent inhabited by the Third Race, perished many hundreds of thousands of years before the commencement of the Tertiary Age. *The Secret Doctrine* says that *bone man* began to appear 18,000,000 years ago in the Eocene epoch or early Tertiary period, and that the Atlantean or Fourth Race began in the Miocene or middle Tertiary period.

This sketch would be incomplete if we did not include the surprising statement that man was the *first* mammal to appear on earth; nor must we fail to remind our readers that according to *The Secret Doctrine* man is the product of two or three separate streams of evolution, one of his astral and physical body, another of his mind and still a third, perhaps, of the monad or soul, although his mind and soul are often treated together. The apes and other manlike animals are not

the progenitors of man, but are the product of unlawful intercourse between early, mindless men and animals. There was at that time a sufficiently close zoological kinship between this primitive mindless man and the existent animals, to make such association possible.

A final word or two must be written upon the scientific theories about the geological, climatic and other changes affecting the surface of the earth and its flora and fauna; and how these theories agree with what is said in *The Secret Doctrine* about cataclysms and other great terrestrial disturbances and changes. On the whole there is more coincidence of belief than one would expect. *The Secret Doctrine* says that there are a series of major and minor disturbances, some caused by water, some by earthquake and fire, some by cold, which profoundly affect all forms of life on this planet: that these changes occur periodically, according to cyclic law, and that mankind has lived through very many of them. The fundamental cause of these changes is not given. The surface of the earth at different periods of the past, is described in some detail, and these periods and the continents pertaining to them are correlated with the earlier Races of mankind; Lemuria, stretching from Africa across the Indian Ocean, and joining Southern India, and Ceylon, with the Islands of the South Pacific, being the home of the Third Race; and Atlantis stretching from America to Europe over the central Atlantic Ocean, being the home of the Fourth. We are told that modern Europe rose from the sea 10 to 15 million years ago.

The speculations of Science as to continents that must have existed in past ages, to account for the distribution of plants and animals, and for the presence of the same kinds in places which now have no connection with each other, closely agree with *The Secret Doctrine*.

The Secret Doctrine speaks, guardedly and by hints only, of climatic changes brought about by the shifting of the earth's axis, every sidereal year, which is 25,868 solar years long. In a table on page 23 of Prof. Osborne's book, is given the durations of the several ice ages which Europe is known to have experienced. The unit of time accepted by science in these calculations is 25,000 years. Each of the glacial periods is put down as having lasted 25,000 years (a sidereal year?), and the inter-glacial periods are measured in multiples of 25,000. The average inter-glacial period is about 150,000 years, or six sidereal years, thus, with the Ice Age itself, completing a cycle of seven.

It is exceedingly interesting to note that a reduction of only seven degrees in the average mean temperature is all that is required to bring about an Ice Age. When that reduction of temperature takes place, and, of course, it happens very slowly, the ice line on the mountain tops begins to creep down, until it descends 1,000 or 1,500 feet. The upper valleys of the Rhone and the Rhine in Europe are filled with huge glaciers, and the Juras, the Vosges, and other low-lying mountains, are covered with perpetual snow. Life does not cease. The lower valleys and the plains of Europe still support life, but the character of the flora

and fauna gradually changes from that of the temperate zone to that of the sub-arctic and arctic zones.

But that is not all. Science also records the fact that just as we have ice ages, so also we have tropical ages. Europe has been periodically inhabited by the rhinoceros, the hippopotamus, the crocodile and many other tropical animals and plants. Remains of both arctic and tropical animals and plants have been found so associated with human remains that there is no doubt but that they lived contemporaneously. To make it altogether certain, however, we have the mural drawings of these animals in places where they have long ceased to exist but where we know they once ranged freely.

Science also confirms another teaching of *The Secret Doctrine*. Nothing is more fundamental than the law of ebb and flow, of breathing in and out, of the tides. Now science comes along and says that the so-called solid earth is anything but solid; that it has its rhythmic movement; that all over the earth we have unmistakable evidence that the land is slowly rising, or falling. The level of the Mediterranean Sea has been both several hundred feet higher and several hundred feet lower than its present level. It is probably higher during the cold periods and lower during the warm periods. England, Ireland, and even Iceland, are periodically joined solidly to the European continent, and Italy and Spain to the northern shores of Africa. The Baltic Sea ceases to exist and the Mediterranean becomes a series of lakes.

At Stockholm, where measurements have been kept for a very long period, the movement is nearly two feet in each 100 years. The land around the Great Lakes in our country is tilting south-west at the rate of six inches in every 100 years and it is estimated that in 500 or 600 years more, Lake Michigan will inundate Chicago, and the Lakes will drain into the Mississippi instead of into the Atlantic Ocean, as at present.

It is estimated that the Mississippi basin has risen 1,000 feet in six million years. Many places show a comparatively recent emergence from the sea of 100 feet or more.

Science does not know why these changes take place, but it knows they do take place, and so far it supports the theories and contentions of the Secret Wisdom; but the facts which it has available for the fabrication of its theories are so incomplete and so limited that it does not, of course, begin to teach the full theory or regular cyclic changes which *The Secret Doctrine* propounds. Nevertheless it is getting there. Already, in geology, where it has the most comprehensive data available, it is in almost complete agreement, and there is no reason to doubt that as data accumulates, and as old prejudices and theories are abandoned, even the "short time" theorists like Prof. Osborne will approach nearer and nearer to the truth. In the meantime he has written an exceedingly interesting book.

 C. A. G.

NOTES ON ROUNDS AND RACES

THE vast developments of spiritual life have been divided, for convenience of study, into greater periods, called Rounds; and these have been further subdivided into lesser periods called Races.

A Round is a succession of developments round the seven planets of a chain, of which our earth is the fourth and most material; the three which precede the earth, and the three which follow, are invisible, because too ethereal for our vision. To Masters, they are plainly visible and more real, because less material, than our earth.

Seven times, the Life-wave, the sum of spiritual life, sweeps round the chain of seven planets, each circular journey being called a Round. We are now in the Fourth Round, with three Rounds behind us, and with three more to come, after this Fourth Round is completed. Of the meaning of the future Rounds, we may form some idea, if we remember that an adept has been called in *Esoteric Buddhism* "a normal Fifth Rounder"; and that a Master of Masters has been called "a normal Sixth Rounder." This makes clear that Masters are now what humanity is to be later.

It would seem that each Round completely develops one of the Seven Principles. We may suppose, therefore, that, in the First Round, the mineral principle was developed; chemical elements, in ethereal forms (such as, perhaps, they now wear in the solar atmosphere), being developed on the seven planets; one group of elements on each planet. We may imagine that the Hydrogen group was developed on the first planet (Planet A), and that the gold group, the heaviest, was developed on our earth, the fourth in the chain (Planet D).

The Second Round was, we are told, the vegetable Round, in which the already prepared chemical elements were worked over again, in a new way, under the play of new forces, resulting in internal growth and propagation.

The Third Round was the animal Round, distinguished from the vegetable by locomotion, requiring the development of forms fitted for movement from place to place, and, for that reason, more complete and self-contained. Animal life carries forward and develops much of vegetable life, such as internal circulation, nutrition and propagation.

The Fourth Round is the Round of Man, possessing a body made of chemical substances (prepared in the First Round), with the powers of nutrition and propagation (developed in the Second Round), and with the power of locomotion and a self-contained form (reached in the Third Round). Man, the normal Fourth Rounder, is distinguished by fuller self-consciousness and individual will, with wide powers of choice.

He stands at the mid-point of the whole progression, at the half-way division of the Seven Rounds; and, in virtue of his self-conscious power of choice, he is able to choose to go on, or to go backwards. A large possibility of choice is given him, through a long epoch; on his decision rests his future fate. If he chooses to go back, he chooses evil, for the essence of evil is retrogression, degradation. If he chooses good, angelic destinies await him. He stands today at the point of choice. Each one of us stands at that point of choice; our whole future, throughout eons, will depend, first, on our choice, and, second, on the succession of efforts we make, to realize our choice. To go forward, we must become in succession, the disciple, the Adept, the highest Master, who represent, as we have seen, the development proper to the Fifth and Sixth Rounds.

What is true of the Rounds, is true, on a lesser scale, of the Races. Each race develops and perfects one of the Seven Principles. Perhaps it will not be misleading to say that the First Race develops the First Principle, a body "luminous, semi-ethereal, cold, lifeless, translucid," which, like the world it inhabits, only later becomes opaque; the Second Race develops the Second Principle, adding vital warmth, so that the body is no longer "lifeless," though it is still semi-ethereal. The Third Race adds the Third Principle, gradually making of the new man a complete physical animal. The Fourth Race develops the Fourth Principle, Kama, the energy of desire, containing the power to choose between good and evil. The mid-point of the Fourth Race, in this Fourth Round was, in fact, the turning-point of the whole progression, the period of choice between good and evil, and the condition of the world today is the immediate result of that choice. The Fifth Race, to which we belong, has begun to develop, and will develop, the Fifth Principle, Manas. The Sixth Race will develop the Sixth Principle, Buddhi. The Seventh Race will fully manifest the Seventh Principle, Atma.

But these higher principles will be developed only so far as is possible in this, the Fourth Round. The perfect development of the Fifth Principle will be the work of the Fifth Round; that of the Sixth Principle will be completed only in the Sixth Round; and so with the Seventh.

This is made clear in *The Secret Doctrine* (Volume II, edition of 1888, page 301): "We are only in the Fourth Round, and it is in the Fifth that the full development of *Manas,* as a direct ray from the Universal Mahat—a ray unimpeded by matter—will be finally reached. Nevertheless, as every sub-race and nation have their cycles and stages of developmental evolution repeated on a smaller scale, it must be the more so in the case of a Root-Race. Our race then has, as a Root-Race, crossed the equatorial line and is cycling onward on the Spiritual side; but some of our sub-races still find themselves on the shadowy descending arc of their respective national cycles; while others again—the oldest—having crossed their crucial point, which alone decides whether a race, a nation, or a tribe will live or perish, are at the apex of spiritual development as sub-races."

Let us now try to give life to this rather shadowy outline. We have seen that each Round takes over, and carries forward, the harvest of the preceding Rounds. For simplicity, we considered only the more external part of that harvest. But the process holds equally of the inner and spiritual heritage. Our Round inherited not only the mineral, vegetable and animal progress of the past, but also its angelic progress. That past, we may, perhaps, say, had produced as its harvest, a host, a multitude of angels, of divine beings, embodying the higher spiritual principles. The East has called this angelic host the Devas (literally "Shining Ones"), or Solar Lords, or Manasa Putras, or Agnishwatta Pitris. But the reality is more important than the name.

One may say that the work of the earlier Races (the First, Second and part of the Third Race) consisted simply in the preparation of suitable bodies for these angelic hosts of Devas; bodies for these living souls. And the essence of the matter is, that, while their incarnation *began* in the middle of the Third Race, it was not completed then; it is not completed yet; it is still going on. In each one of us, the Deva is struggling to incarnate, and that struggle is the substance of our spiritual life. Each day, in each hour, by each act, we are either helping or hindering that incarnation. Hence the very import of every act. The spiritual part of all religions enjoins the acts which aid the incarnation of the Deva, and forbids the acts which hinder it. From this point of view, the Disciple, the Chela, is the incarnating Deva; the Adept, the Master, is the incarnate Deva. Therefore, it would seem, the Divine Incarnation is the centre of the religion of the Western Avatar; the Avatar doctrine, embodying exactly the same truth, being the centre of the Eastern religions. Each of these religions gives us a living model of the future spiritual races, who, by his life and teaching, makes clear the way in which we must reach the same development.

It may be useful to go over the ground again, quoting, for each stage, the passages of *The Secret Doctrine* which describe it. (Quotations are made from Volume II, edition of 1888.)

In order of materiality, the Physical Body (Sthula Sharira) is counted the First Principle, counting from below upwards. It would seem that, in order of time, the Linga Sharira (the Form Body) is the first, the earliest principle, and that the First Race developed the Form Body (Linga Sharira). This ethereal body was put forth, emanated, or projected from earlier beings, called the Lunar Pitris, who thus conveyed to this Round and Planet the harvest of previous Rounds and Planets. In *The Secret Doctrine,* the ethereal body of the First Race (which took millions of years to develop fully) is thus described: "the model of the physical, the astral man" (p. 79); "the lunar spirits were the *ancestors of his form, i. e.,* of the model according to which Nature began her external work upon him" (p. 102); "thus primitive man was, when he appeared, only a senseless Bhuta (ghost) or phantom" (*ibid.*); First Race man was a "luminous, incorporeal form" (p. 112); "these

'shadows' were born 'each of his own colour and kind,'" (p. 97). The "man" of the First Race would seem, therefore, to have been what the Linga Sharira is now, though of huge dimensions; or, to put it in the opposite way, the Linga Sharira (Form Body) in each one of us would seem to be a condensed First Race man; this is our inheritance from the First Race.

It would seem that the Second Race infused into this shadowy man the Principle of Prana, vital heat, the breath of physical life: "the vital electric principle residing in the Sun" (p. 105); "the *animal electric* and solar fires, which create animals, and could thus furnish but a physical living constitution to that first astral model of man" (p. 102); the 'Solar' *Lhas,* Spirits, warm them, the shadows" (p. 110).

The Third Race added the completely physical body, though very much larger than our present bodies; just as the body of the adult is much larger than the body of the infant, though it is in reality the same body. In this sense, the Sthula Sharira (Gross Body) would seem to be the contribution of the Third Race and the present representative of the Third Race in ourselves.

We come now to the central, vital fact of the whole teaching. We have outlined only the external, physical evolution and its harvest: the fully formed animal man. There was also a vastly greater interior and spiritual evolution, which had for its harvest an angelic host, a multitude of Devas ("Shining Ones"), united in a harmonized Divine Life.

Concerning this angelic host, *The Secret Doctrine* says:

"These Beings were returning *Nirvanees,* from preceding Maha-Manvantaras—ages of incalculable duration which have rolled away in the Eternity" (p. 79-80).

"What is human mind in its higher aspect, whence comes it, if it is not a portion of the essence—and, in some rare cases of incarnation, the *very essence*—of a higher Being: one from a higher and divine plane? . . . man is an animal *plus* a *living god*" (p. 81).

". . . the Angel in him incarnated . . ." (p. 88).

"Some of these were *Nirmanakayas* from other Manvantaras" (p. 94).

"There is an eternal cyclic law of re-births, and the series is headed at every new Manvantaric dawn by those who had enjoyed their rest from re-incarnations in previous Kalpas for incalculable *Æons*—by the highest and the earliest *Nirvanees.* It was the turn of these "Gods" to incarnate in the present Manvantara; hence their presence on Earth . . ." (p. 232).

The divine plan would seem to have been that the first three Races should prepare fitting forms for these descending "gods," who, incarnating in these forms, should then begin a splendid cycle of spiritual evolution, through the subsequent races: "Having passed through all the kingdoms of nature in the previous *three* Rounds, his *physical* frame was ready to receive the *divine Pilgrim.* . . ." (p. 254).

But the divine plan was not fully carried out: ". . . of the Host of Dhyanis, whose turn it was to incarnate as the *Egos* of the immortal, but, *on this plane, senseless* monads—some 'obeyed' (the law of evolution) immediately when the men of the Third Race became physiologically and physically ready, *i.e.*, when they had separated into sexes. These were those early conscious Beings who, now adding conscious knowledge and will to their inherent Divine purity, *created* by *Kriyasakti* the semi-Divine man, who became the seed on earth for future adepts."

"Those, on the other hand, who, jealous of their intellectual freedom (unfettered as it then was by the bonds of matter), said:—'We can choose . . . we have wisdom' and incarnated far later—these had their first Karmic punishment prepared for them. They got bodies (physiologically) inferior to their astral models, because their *chhayas* had belonged to progenitors of an inferior degree in the seven classes. As to those 'Sons of Wisdom' who had 'deferred' their incarnation till the Fourth Race, which was already tainted (physiologically) with sin and impurity, they produced a terrible cause, the Karmic result of which weighs on them to this day. It was produced in themselves, and they became the carriers of that seed of iniquity for æons to come, because the bodies they had to inform had become defiled through their own procrastination. This was the 'Fall of the angels,' because of their rebellion against Karmic Law. The 'fall of *man*' was no fall, for he was irresponsible" (p. 228).

Or, to put the same thing in another way: It would seem that part of the Angelic Host which incarnated fully in the Third Race became the nucleus of the Adept Hierarchy: "That class of the 'Fire Dhyanis,' which we identify on undeniable grounds with the Agnishwattas, is called in our school the 'Heart' of the Dhyan-Chohanic Body: and it is said to have incarnated in the Third Race of men and made them perfect" (p. 91).

But many did not then incarnate. The bodies (animal men) brought to their culminating point by the development of the first three Races, should have been ensouled and inspired by the Host, and should have gone forward to ever increasing heights of spiritual glory. But, lacking this divine guidance, and having acquired momentum by their immense periods of development, they plunged forward into animalism, and descended into the depths of bestiality. And, since love debased contains the seed of hatred, they developed, with impure desire, the instincts of destruction: "When the Third (Race) separated and fell into sin by breeding men-animals, these became ferocious, and men and they mutually destructive" (p. 201).

Under this terrible impulse, they were carried forward into the Fourth and even the Fifth Race, "the psychic being guided by the animal, and both putting out the light of the spiritual" (p. 413).

It would seem that, as each new Race begins while the preceding Race is in its prime, and for ages runs parallel with that earlier race,

so each principle has its beginning within the preceding principle, and within the period assigned to that principle; so that (just as during the Third Race period, the Fourth Race had its origin and much of its development), the Fourth Principle, Kama, had already begun its development during the period of the Third Race; and that that development was enormously accelerated by the failure of the divine plan: the failure of the Devas to incarnate, and undertake the guidance and control of the new principle of Desire. In the Fourth Race, the Atlantean, that principle had an enormous development, so that Atlantis was called "the land of Sin" (p. 322).

The Fifth Race began about a million years ago, while the Fourth Race had still long ages to run. So, it would seem, the Fifth Principle, Manas, began to develop within the Fourth Principle, as a spark of spiritual intelligence illumining Desire; so that to the result the term Kama-Manas would rightly apply. But the Karma of the Fourth Race bore very heavily upon the Fifth; it was carried into the Fifth Race by the incarnation in that Race of the souls who had sinned in the Fourth—by ourselves. We have, therefore, within us at this moment the impure and defiled Kama-Manas which is our inheritance from the great epoch of evil; and the Deva, who is still striving to incarnate in us, has to lift, combat and conquer that heavy burden of sin. This would be an almost impossible task, were it not for the help of those Divine Beings who, incarnating at first, free of the evil Karma, went forward on their destined spiritual way, becoming those Masters who are now able to help the masses of humanity, and in particular those who are seeking to become fit vehicles for the incarnating Deva—those who are seeking to live the life of the Disciple.

The "Kama Rupa and Mayavi Rupa" would seem to be our Atlantean and early Fifth Race inheritance: the embodiment of the Karma of Desire and external mind which we accumulated during the long æons of these races, when we should have been guided and ensouled (but were not, in fact, guided and ensouled) by the incarnating Dhyani or Deva. This complex of Karma, therefore, must be, in a sense, dissolved, purified, rebuilt; thus providing "a permanent individual vehicle for the occupation of the Soul or Higher Ego"; that is, for the Dhyani or Deva, who is at last given an opportunity to complete his long-delayed incarnation. This purification is "the Augean task." But it would seem that there is a brighter side to this dark picture. The divine law finds its gain even from so much failure, for "Perfection, to be fully such, must be born out of imperfection, the incorruptible must grow out of the corruptible, having the latter as its vehicle and basis and contrast" (*Secret Doctrine* II, 95).

Perhaps we have here also the clue to the vexed question of true and false personality. The Third Race men in whom the Divine Beings incarnated at the right time, and "made them perfect," possessed true

personality from the beginning: an intensely personal and individualized life expressing the divine and spiritual consciousness. But the Third Race men who, not thus ensouled, were carried forward through the Fourth Race and into the Fifth Race, formed a false personality, a nexus of Atlantean Karma, an individual self of impure desire. If this be so, then, in order that the true personality (the individual consciousness of the incarnating Deva) may be developed, the false personality must be "dissolved," as is taught in *Light on the Path;* when this is done, then "the Warrior" will fight in us; the Deva, the Divine Being, will fight his way into full incarnation. When that incarnation is complete, Adeptship has been reached; the process is Discipleship.

If this be so, it would seem that the Disciple, the Chela, must pass (ahead of the mass of humanity) through the development of the Sixth and Seventh Races, with their splendid spiritual attainment; just as Adepts and the highest Masters pass (ahead of the mass of mankind) through the development of the Fifth and Sixth Rounds; the Seventh Round bringing a perfection quite incomprehensible to us. So that Disciples and Masters simply outstrip the rest in the race of spiritual perfection; and, so doing, can mightily help their slower brethren. From one point of view, perhaps, this is the purpose for which Masters and their Disciples exist.

It would seem, then, to be the part of wisdom for us to recognize every aspiration in ourselves, every spiritual prompting, as the voice of the Dhyani, the Deva, seeking, at this late day, to come into incarnation; the part of wisdom equally to recognize the evil in us (the sensual, the selfish, the demonic) as our Atlantean heritage: the deadly impediment in the way of the Deva's incarnation; and, with this clear vision, and relying on the help of those in whom the Divine is already incarnate, to set ourselves even at the eleventh hour, to retrieve the great calamity: to purify, dissolve, subjugate, the false personality, bringing it at each point and in each particular, into subjection to the true, the Divine Being who seeks to use us for his vesture, to incarnate in us.

A STUDENT.

Resign every forbidden joy; restrain every wish that is not referred to His will; banish all eager desires, all anxiety. Desire only the will of God; seek Him alone, and you will find peace.—François de la Mothe Fénelon.

GOD KNOWETH BEST

ONE day Servetus came to me, full of a talk he had had with his beloved Mentor. They were at lunch, and he had been struggling desperately to attain that silence which was urged upon him; but so many questions buzzed into his mind about which he needed light that it seemed to him that eternity itself could not give time enough for answering them—and silence now seemed a loss. Somewhere inside of himself, he knew that this was a misunderstanding of the value of silence, and it was really as a cry for help that he finally said:

"If I only had a different environment, I know I could make a start on the Path. If I could only give up business and go into some cloister."

His Mentor, he told me, looked at him for a moment with that loving smile, full of sympathy, and tried but unflagging patience, and then said:

"So long as you are cock-sure that you know more than God does about what is best for you, I am afraid there's little hope of your making even a start. Until you see that Divine Love has picked out the ideal time, place, and circumstances—just as, and where, you are now situated—for you to conquer yourself, you are wasting your time in even talking about the Path. I mean this—for dreaming about what you could do, under other circumstances, is as bad for your soul as feeding poison to your body."

When Servetus first told me about this, I revolted at the doctrine implied; my own experience had, I felt, taught me that there could be no progress in discipleship apart from congenial religious teachers, religious surroundings, and a religious atmosphere. It was not long, however, before Fate, or Karma, as I understand you T. S. members call it, gave me a chance to test my theory. The circumstances in my own life changed, and I had to move on to new surroundings.

I had been living in a religious community, and had been permitted to aid in some of its activities, though I had not been allowed to cloister myself by taking the vows. It was a delightful life. There were times when the physical reactions of it carried me back to my boyhood days when I had lain outstretched on the golden sands in the flaming sun of California, gazing out over the loveliness of the Pacific, revelling in pictures of the Orient, across the dreamy waters; intoxicated with warmth and health and the vital vigor flooding into me from air and sun and earth.

Day after day I shared in Offices and Services; day after day I listened to the teaching. I enjoyed that instruction as I had, in those

younger days, enjoyed the life beyond the mountains. My Confessor did not, however, appreciate that type of religious experience; when I painted to him the delights of religion in the terms of my love of nature, he would say: "Smith, can you not see that you were lying down in laziness then, and that you are just as lazy now? You talk about the Life; but you do not lead it; and you do not even try to lead it. When you get up on time; when you eat in moderation; when you write that book you have been talking about; then I shall begin to believe that you do feel what you claim to feel."

This used to make me blazing angry. But I prided myself on my good manners and I felt that I owed the Brothers outer courtesy while they allowed me to stay with them. My desire to stay seemed to me, in part at least, unselfish. I felt that the House needed me; needed my experience; the experience of an educated and successful man of the world, who had travelled much and who had had many adventures, and who had, as I believed, made his mark.

The Prior, of whom I was very fond, although I felt that he was often stiff-necked in his obstinacy and unnecessarily frank in expressing his views, would say to me: "Brother Smith, you are slipping back all the time. There is nothing religious in staying here when you ought to go out and look after your property. That is your most important job, for it involves others. You have no right to leave it to subordinates. I only hope that you amount to enough so that God may give you a lesson in time. I pray often to good St. Francis that he will take this matter in hand."

"But, dear Brother," I would protest, "I want to be a disciple and I cannot be a disciple if I distract my mind with worldly things."

"Duties in the world are not worldly things," the Prior would reply with sternness. Often I felt that to argue the question, since all the arguments were on my side, would only amount to making it still more difficult for him to control his trying temper, so I would find some excuse for withdrawing.

Yet there were gloomy moments, when I felt that I was not making the progress that I really wanted to make. These times did not come after my talks with my Confessor. You see, in those days, I was so proud of my self control while he was pitching into me, that there was room in the universe for nothing but my pride in being so meek. Hence it was, as I now see, that, while my ears heard him, he was right when he used to say: "Brother Smith, it is self-indulgent for you to come to me so often, for you do not do the things you ought to do; you know what they are as well as I do."

Usually I was able to lull the cry of conscience, to avoid the nettles of unpleasant truths. This was particularly easy when I gave myself up to absorbed enjoyment in contemplating the beautiful lives of the members of the Community. It gave me some comprehension of what our Lord's life must be like, to see them practising, daily, "love's divine

self abnegation," and enjoying sufferings and hardships. Yes, enjoying them. It was wonderful to watch the Brothers. No lovely landscape was ever half so beautiful as their lives.

How trying it was, at such times of bliss, to have the Prior ask: "When are you going to begin?" or to hear dread words from the Abbot: "I am not sure that it is best for you, Smith, to let you stay on here." Then I would realize what I risked losing. If I could not make spiritual growth there, in that sunny, sheltered garden spot, how could I, out in the world? For a time I would write to my relatives; would eat less; would look at time tables and plan to go to see my man of business. Also I would redouble my reading of good books. Under one such reaction I memorized beloved á Kempis' *Imitations,* and drew, in rapt feeling, upon them as I had been wont to draw upon the blazing sun—and moved as little, too!

In the outer world there were troublesome days, particularly in the horrific world of finance. Several times the Abbot gently urged me to go forth and to see for myself how things were. Each time I told him that I dared not leave the Community, knowing so well my own weaknesses, but that if he would give me an order I would obey. Each time he sadly told me that he could not command me, that the suggestion was further even than he felt he should go. My affairs were, after all, my affairs, and it was not for him to meddle, beyond counselling me to go forth. But I was afraid to go. Besides, despite all he said of the limitations upon him, I waited for a formal command. That was my excuse to myself.

The great crash came; perhaps some of you remember it. Word reached me that most of my income was swept away. Fearing lest those dependent upon me should suffer, I sent word to my lawyers to sell out the little property that was left, and to supply them with funds, as needed, until I had made plans and provided other means. When the old Porter said to me that day: "I suppose we shall be losing you soon, Brother Smith?" I answered: "I fear so, Brother, but not for some time," and walked on.

The Prior joined me—"Why—'not for some time'?" he asked.

"What profiteth a man to gain the whole world and lose his own soul," I answered in sorrow; thinking how utterly unworthy I was to fare forth from that haven of hope and peace and knowledge.

"Smith, Smith, you can never save your soul by neglecting your duties," and the Prior swept on.

I was moved even to tears. I was neglecting my duties. My kith and kin did need my help. They should have it. Had I not faith? Could not faith move mountains? I would pray for help for him. I was privileged to use the Oratory for prayer, and into its holy precincts I hurried; precincts fragrant with the veritable Presence of the Master; that Master who is more than Lord and King; that Master who is loving Father and protecting Friend. To Him, in my need,

I poured out my heart in an agony of petition that he save and succour those of my own people who were now threatened with poverty and privation through the loss of my estate.

Great was the comfort that I experienced; great the relief from that hideous sense of personal responsibility. I went to my Confessor for counsel, but he shook his head: "Brother, you know I may not advise you in such matters, and I can give you no more counsel than I have already given." Thus neglected, as I then felt, I turned back to the Oratory to take comfort from my prayers. More and more time did I spend there; more and more fervent grew my petition.

Coming out from the Oratory one day, I met the Abbot and the Prior. "We are glad to see you looking so happy," said the Head. "Are your affairs turning out better than you had expected?"

"Worse, if anything, just now," I answered, with a gaiety that was not assumed, since it came from the heart. "You see, I have taken it to the Lord in prayer. I feel that I have no longer to worry, that He will look out for us as He does for the sparrows—and for you, dear Brothers. It's a test of my faith."

Never before had I seen our Abbot, that most perfect of born aristocrats, forget his breeding (as I then, so foolishly, felt). He gave me one blazing look—"You fool," he said, "are you sleeping in sloth, or drunk with self-indulgence?" And he passed on without another word. But I could not bear to have him leave me so. "O Abbot," I cried, "it is not as bad as that. There is still some property left, enough to last until I turn to making money. I have made it before, and I can again; this time I am going to make enough so I may come back for good, with no outside responsibilities."

Brief and enigmatical was the first reply: "Responsibilities—or opportunities?" I did not see an obvious answer to this somewhat platitudinous remark, so I kept still.

"You think you can make money. I fear you will have hard work even to earn your daily bread, in the condition into which you have allowed yourself to sink."

This was so unjust to himself, to the Community, and to all the great advance that they stood for in my life,—that I could not help smiling with pride in the Abbot's unfailing humility. He had regained control of himself and with his customary courtliness he bowed me farewell. The Prior lingered an instant: "Are you going to follow his instructions and leave? I could arrange for you to go down tonight."

"You can't shake my faith," I replied with renewed gaiety, as I thought I saw through their plan of testing me to the uttermost.

The Prior said: "Smith, there is something to you, or you would never have been allowed to stay here, but I fear that the Lord will have to love you enough to let you and your loved ones starve to death before you will really put your feet on the road that leads to Calvary

and its glory." Then he too left me. I was left fighting those devils of doubt, depression and discouragement whose grandsire St. Michael slew, with his valiant, ringing laugh. Cheered by remembrance of the old tradition I too laughed, and I went back into the Oratory to pray; to pray desperately for immediate and instant help. Though I knew it not, this was to be the last time for many a weary month that I was to pray in the holiness of the Oratory. The very next morning I was called away, literally summonsed out. I left with the blessing of the Abbot and the prayers of the Prior and the Brothers.

The details of the next few years would be boresome. I first found that I could not keep my mind off "religion" and on business. Then I found myself recognizing that this was flagrant disloyalty to the faith I held, for I believed that an earnest follower of the Master should by that very fact be made stronger on all planes. Somewhat waked up, I went back into the stock market—only to lose what little I had left; either I had lost my cunning, or else the Heavenly Powers felt I was not again to be trusted with prosperity—the latter was the comforting suggestion in one of the letters from the Prior, who had taken up writing to me. I never lost my faith that the Master would take care of me, and with this conviction as my inner security, I did not hesitate to borrow outwardly, and so kept my cousins going. The Prior drew out this fact and then wrote that, for the first time, he was beginning to doubt the sincerity of my faith and desire.

This remark had troubled me so much that, when I was offered a district sales agency for a sewing machine, I did not refuse at once, but went to a nearby city, where I knew the Prior was conducting a retreat. I told him of what had been offered to me, explaining that if I took it I felt I should be forever cut off from my old line of work, and should have no further opportunity there, or with my old associates and customers. The old friend who offered me the place was sales manager of the concern and one of its owners. I told the Prior that Jones had promised to teach me himself, and that Jones believed that I should make a success.

"Are you making any money now, or are you living on what you borrow?" I confessed to the latter state of affairs and further confessed that I was daily finding it harder to finance myself on credit. I pointed out that my debts had grown so large that I could not see any way of paying them in the new business, and that my only hope was in one of the lucky investments that I used to make, when I was in my old business life; the proposed departure would shut me off from all such chances.

"Have you anything else in sight?"

I had to admit that there was nothing else, and that all my friends thought it was my duty to take the opening, but that I felt I should be doing an injustice to my creditors, in cutting myself off from any chance of paying them, for years.

"You are earning nothing; you have no other opening; and yet you don't see what to do?"

"But I hate it so, and I do so want to pay my debts, that I feel I haven't any judgment left. I don't know what to do."

"There seems but one plain, simple, obvious duty before you; but I may not take the responsibility of giving you an order—beyond what I have said. Are you still in doubt?"

"I don't know what to do. Please tell me."

The Prior was silent for a moment. Then he said. "The Abbot is here. He will help you—if you will let him."

When the Abbot saw us, I went over the whole matter of my doubts as to my duties. The Abbot asking many searching questions, and then said:

"Are you still desirous of coming back to us and taking the vows?"

"I am."

"Why?"

It seemed impossible for me to pick out of the whirlwind that swept in upon me the answer that would best express all I felt. Then there came before me, as in letters of fire, certain immortal words, and I quoted them as my answer:

" 'Man is created to praise, reverence, and serve God our Lord, and by this means to save his soul.' "

"You have so desired and have so prayed in faith?"

I bowed my head.

"Then in Heaven's name, my brother, why not take the means that your prayers have brought you? The Prior has shown you the Path. Step out upon it boldly, and may the Master's blessing be upon your obedience."

So I became a sewing machine salesman, with a weak hope that I should find in it what I had refused to take in the House of Holiness, a step towards discipleship.

Jones took me to Chicago that he might keep him near me. His very first talk surprised me. For months it savoured to me of hypocrisy. He said: "Some of your friends have thought that your interest in religion has unfitted you for business life. I do not feel so. If a man does not have a feeling of altruism in his work there is no hope for him. You ought to be able to sell sewing machines better, and to teach other men how to sell them better, because you appreciate what it means to women in saving them time, and strength, and labour. I should not have taken you if I did not count on this."

How shocking this sounded. Yet I have learned that all successful salespeople feel that they are helping their customers. No one, I find, lasts in the "selling game," who does not so feel and believe, whether it be selling bonds, or real estate, or notions across a counter. The sincerity required for success in business is a lesson to any religious aspirant.

I went to work, feeling myself better than my job. It did not take me long to learn that I was not. Then I discovered that I must be in earnest. Jones was anxious to make me succeed. It was not for months that I knew that he was trying to win the hand of one of my cousins, and so was sincere, and loving even, in his desire to be of service to me. I had thought of all business as selfish and uncharitable; the selling end particularly so. Yet, from the beginning, no member of the T. S. could have preached brotherhood more strenuously than did Jones. He told me never to criticise a rival machine. "You have been to the factory. You know that no better machine is built. All modern machines are good and no one will really suffer who buys any up-to-date machine, so don't criticise machines or methods of paying for them. Criticism never helps make a sale and it does hurt the industry. Besides every one is suspicious of a backbiter."

"Work with others?" Jones cried. "No man ever gets ahead alone. Don't be always looking for what you can get out of helping the other men. It will all work out in the wash, when they find that you are really trying to help them and not to work them. Besides it helps you to learn to get on with people. If you think all the time about yourself you won't be able to think about the other person, to put yourself in his place, to figure out what he or she really wants—and that's all that counts in selling—what you think or want will never make anybody else buy. You have got to learn to love people before you can learn to sell and to teach others to sell."

At the Community great had been the emphasis placed on the need for cultivating the power of silence and on the dynamic strength that silence would bring. I had thought that popular selling meant much talking. You may again appreciate my surprise when Jones declared: "Never talk much. Think all the time, especially when you are selling. Many a man talks people into a sale and then talks them out of it. Never talk much. You are a good talker, and I am afraid of that. I am afraid that you will get people interested in you, instead of interesting them in the machine. That's your job—to sell the machine. Nobody is really interested in you. Every one is interested in himself. If you put yourself forward too much you will end by making people distrust you or even dislike you."

I had to succeed, so I tried to follow these directions. The process brought back to me many of the counsels of my Confessor at the House. I found myself applying his teachings in my daily business intercourse. I wrote him once, speaking of the way in which I was thus "degrading" his teaching. He wrote back that I made him feel more than ever that he had failed to help me, for I ought to be able to realize that spiritual laws and practices are of universal application, and that, if true anywhere, they should serve in all situations in life.

One feature of the Community life had never appealed to me, and I had taken advantage of my position as a guest to dodge it. That was the insistence upon an exact and momentary rule of life and the close attention, amounting even to interference, paid to the details and minutæ of dress and manners. But no novice master was ever stricter than Jones, not only with me, but with all his active salesmen. "You have no right to dress as you please, or to act as you please, so long as you are selling our machine. When you go to people, they judge us. They don't think of you. If you wear too loud clothes; if you are careless or slovenly we suffer; you don't." Jones had never heard of "singularity," against which all great Abbots have fulminated, yet even St. Benedict was no more severe on this sin of selfishness than was Jones.

He took as much interest in our food and table manners as if he were Head of a Community, instead of being head of a selling force. "The man who eats too much, can't work. The man who eats irregularly will work irregularly. Have a time for everything and do it at the time that you have planned. Go to bed on time whenever you possibly can, but, whatever you may have done the night before, get up on time."

Morals, too, proved to be a business asset, indeed a business requirement. Jones was as strict as the Prior, and as jealous of the good name of his House. "Never do anything that you haven't planned. You do need recreation, but take it as part of your plan, do not make it a matter of laziness; if you do it will upset you, and you won't work as well. Keep a daily record; keep track of your hours. Plan ahead for each day; on Saturdays plan, so far as you can, for the week ahead. Tell me what you are doing. Tell me your mistakes. I have no use for a man who makes no mistakes, but I won't keep a man who does not tell me about them. Make me your Confessor. The only way you will ever learn to be a good salesman is to study your mistakes and blunders to see what was really behind them, so you will not be making them again.

"You'll get discouraged; you'll often think that there are a dozen better machines on the market. That's all right. It won't hurt you—if you keep on working. The more you work the better you will work, and the easier it will be to work. It is only when you loaf that you really get tired and inefficient. That's why I want you to keep a record, so that you will know when you are not working. It is easy to fool yourself, with some good sales, into thinking that you are working, but in the long run you need day-by-day selling; not some big orders."

Jones watched the style of living of his force. He used to say that an extravagant man could not be a good salesman, for the habit infected his whole life, and cropped out when he came up against his customers who distrusted the extravagant man, even when they did not

know the real reason for their distrust. He insisted on obedience, in all matters, or resignation. "I should not be kept as manager if I didn't know enough to help you."

All the training, regulation, and discipline that I might have had at the House, were given to me as a part of Jones' selling force; and I was growing to be proud of holding my place in what was a noted organization.

Many things interested me in the parallel, which I found growing more and more apparent. What really interested me the most was the way that Jones' teaching brought back the instruction at the House. There were times when I could hear tones of the Abbot's voice, and recognize tricks of expression, characteristic of that great and holy man, as I listened to Jones. First, I found that what I had learned at the House was helping me as a salesman. Then I found that what I was learning and practising as a salesman, was helping me to understand what the Brotherhood had been trying for years to make me see and do. In short I found that in keeping myself at work, efficiently and persistently at work selling sewing machines, I was actually beginning to make a start toward discipleship. I had dreamed of doing this but I had only dreamed until I put myself in Jones' hands, worked as he wanted me to work, and worked in order to support those who were dependent upon me.

Jones put especial emphasis, again, on enthusiasm; which must be well-tempered and always considerate of others' feelings; and upon courage. In fact, one day, after one of his sales-talks on courage, I found myself searching my memory for certain familiar words that I felt could best express in brief the key-note of his address. Finally there came back to me that ringing warning and stimulus from the Revelations of the Sacred Heart to the Blessed Margaret Mary, ". . . Lukewarm and cowardly souls I abhor." I had heard the Abbot preach on that, but his great sermon was no more direct an exposition of the text than that sales-talk to a group of men selling sewing machines. As I compared the sales office and the Community I felt like paraphrasing the Mussulman's cry and saying, "There is but one God and Mohamet is His prophet."

When I was sojourning (I no longer dare call it "living") at the House, I was wont to talk a great deal about my feeling that our Lord is a real and living Actuality in the world to-day, taking a personal interest in His children; even giving them individual and closely detailed attention. But I have never really and truly believed this until now. The kindness, the "loving-kindness," shown in taking me out of my pleasant surroundings, when I refused to profit by them, and giving me the same opportunities in other surroundings, proves to me that I am given personal attention.

Not long ago I went back to the House, to spend a brief vacation. I had no difficulty, this time, in entering into the routine; in fact I enjoyed it, for I had learned the wisdom on which it is founded, and the vital help that discipline gives.

"You seem more like one of us now than you did when you lived with us," said one of the older Brothers to me one day.

"He is," said the Prior, who was standing nearby, "for he is trying to do the Lord's will in the Lord's way, and that is by the royal road of obedience."

I may never get back into the House. That is for the Lord to decide. If He thinks it will help my soul to union with His will, I shall yet be one of the professed Brothers, as I should enjoy being. But, if He thinks that the second opportunity would be as bad for me as the first, then I shall not be given it. In which case I shall go on selling sewing machines and shall try to be the best salesman—not only in Chicago—but in all the world, for that will be the best way of expressing my gratitude to Him for showing me that courageous and unflagging obedience is the best way in which man may fulfil the purpose of his creation and "praise, reverence, and serve God our Lord, and by this means to save his soul."

And it is the obedience, I believe, and not the surroundings or occupation, that actually counts.

X——.

In order to mould thee into entire conformity to His will, He must have thee pliable in His hands, and this pliability is more quickly reached by yielding in the little things than even by the greater. Thy one great desire is to follow Him fully; canst thou not say then a continual "yes" to all His sweet commands, whether small or great, and trust Him to lead thee by the shortest road to thy fullest blessedness?—H. W. Smith.

THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS

V

ST. GERTRUDE

The Poet of the Benedictine Order

IN the third section of the *Divine Comedy,* Dante pictures the venerable St. Benedict, and his monks, on the Golden Staircase that forms the Heaven of Saturn—the abode of contemplative spirits. Much lower in the celestial spheres, according to the poet, were found such illustrious souls as Francis of Assisi, Thomas Aquinas, Dominic, Augustine, and others who had distinguished themselves by active warfare against the world, the flesh and the devil. The humbleness (relative) of the station assigned to these four great leaders, is significant of the esteem rendered to the contemplative as compared with the active religious life. As the holy patriarch, Benedict, looks down from his Golden Ladder, upon the evil of the world, he expresses profound regret at the moral misfortune that had overtaken his unworthy descendants: "My Rule is as waste of paper; the walls, which used to be an abbey, have become caves; and the cowls are sacks full of bad meal." It is refreshing to know that what is probably the brightest luminary of the Benedictine constellation shot out its rays from that very dark spot mentioned by the poet—the period of his own life-time. St. Gertrude was a contemporary of Dante; she was born half a century after the founding of the two Orders of Preaching Friars, by St. Dominic and St. Francis,—new Orders made necessary because St. Benedict's Rule had not been able to curb and transform the vicious immorality and selfishness of the world.

By an error in one of the early biographies, St. Gertrude is credited with having been Abbess of Delphos. Whether there was a convent by that name in mediæval Germany or not, it is certain that St. Gertrude was never in charge of it. Yet that error has perpetuated itself in a very curious manner. In the Breviary Office which commemorates the Saint, she is mentioned as the *Delphic* Gertrude (there are other Saints with the name Gertrude, notably, in France). Unintentionally, the liturgical compilers exactly characterised the Saint with that curious, mistaken epithet. She is a divinely inspired (a truly inspired) poet, a poet of religious adoration and union. She invokes, and not vainly, her God and Master, as the Greeks called upon Apollo; and her rapturous songs are in honour of Him who answered her appeals, and granted to her living companionship and face-to-face intercourse.

In secular literature, there often occur single poems, and sometimes an author's whole production, of which the intellectual content is *nil.* Such poems are the bane of the average lecturer, if his curriculum dooms

him to mention them. They afford nothing to talk about—no mythology to be explained, no rhetorical structure to be analysed. They are appropriated and savoured only by a taste keen for essences; others find them uninteresting. Coleridge's "Kubla Khan," and Arthur Symons's "The Return," are examples of such poetry.

In the substantial literature of religion, St. Gertrude is such a poet. She is the distillation both of religion and of poetry. But she is devoid of all those qualities and accessories that give to many other saints a power to interest people of the world, as well as those who have seriously undertaken to fulfil their baptismal vows. She had not the slightest connection with the events that took place in the world during her life time. She was not the counsellor of prelates and sovereigns, as St. Catherine was. She did not reform a great Order, as St. Teresa did. She was not persecuted, like Ignatius. She has not the picturesque setting of St. Francis, or St. Cecilia. She has not the playful humour of Soeur Thérèse. She was, almost, not in the world at all. Born, and bred, and died, in a convent—that is the history of her seventy-one years. Yet, for all her "colourless" biography, as some would call it, she is a saint of fiery essence, the predilection of those who, believing in the Master Christ's continuous humanity, are enkindled with aspiration to come into His Living Presence, to hear His Voice, to see His Face. "The Revelations of St. Gertrude," a sympathetic editor writes, "indeed differ from, or rather are distinguished above, those of other saints, in the familiarity and frequency of these heavenly communications. We shall not read of marvellous miracles, of ecstatic flights, of long-continued raptures, of prophetic announcements, though such events are recorded occasionally; the Saint—if we may be permitted the expression—lived at home with her Spouse; and hence her life was one continued and almost uninterrupted succession of the highest states of spiritual life."

Her records are accessible in three volumes. Two of these are very small devotional books, namely, *The Exercises of St. Gertrude,* and the *Prayers of St. Gertrude.* The third volume is a *Life and Revelations,* very carefully and very lovingly prepared for publication by some Franciscan Sisters of Kenmare, Ireland, who, in this labour of love, offer gratitude to the Benedictine Order for the protection and kindness given to Franciscan nuns when St. Francis was first arranging their foundation.

The *Life and Revelations* is divided into five parts. St. Gertrude wrote part two, only. The third, fourth and fifth parts are comments upon her experience by nameless individuals (probably confessors or nuns.) Part one, also, is similar comment, with meagre biographical details infrequently given. Part two differs markedly from the other four. The saint gives very simply her narrative that covers years of intimate intercourse with her Divine Master. Though there are, at least, two very extraordinary incidents in the long acquaintance, yet even those two are narrated in sober tones. It is noticeable also that what she gives as actually spoken by her Lord is brief, usually only a sentence;

and that these spoken words are not frequent. On the other hand, parts one, three, four, and five might be described as the mediæval "vision" type. They are laudations of Gertrude's virtues—praises that, undoubtedly, are quite deserved, but that seem extravagant in their phrasing. Then, too, these four parts are full of glowing visions, visions granted (it is stated) by the Master in order that His high esteem for Gertrude may be known; and there are long discourses from the Master. The difference between Gertrude's own writing and that of her friends is so marked, that one suspects the latter of a certain amount of self-delusion. These brief writings and the commemorative services to be found in Breviaries of various Orders, are the source of all we know.

Gertrude was born in 1263 (Dante, in 1265), one of several children of a German Count. She left the cradle, one of the Breviaries puts it, for the convent, entering the Benedictine Abbey of Rodersdorf, in her fifth year. Her admission at that early age, it is of course understood, was into the Abbey School, for an education; a younger sister, afterwards St. Mechtilde, came later to the Abbey School, and, also, remained for life. Gertrude became proficient in secular literature, and seems to have used her literary gift and her literary studies as food for vanity. There is no indication of when her school life ended and her vocational work began. Her own narrative begins with her twenty-sixth year. She was chosen Abbess of her own convent when she was thirty; the next year, for some reason not stated, the whole community made a change of residence. Gertrude, of course, went with the community, and remained its head until her death, forty years later. She received final vows from one hundred nuns during this long period of service. Her uneventful outer life closed in 1334.

Though she had for many years been wearing the Benedictine habit as a pledged recluse, she dates her conversion from a Monday in her twenty-sixth year, when, after the closing service of the day, the Master came to her for the first time. The Master's appearance seemed to her (as it did to St. Dominic, also), that of a young boy—a youth of sixteen. Gertrude had gone to the dormitory for the night. Meeting an aged Sister, Gertrude bent to her in salutation. As she raised herself from the greeting, the Master, standing there, said: "Thy salvation is at hand; why are thou consumed with grief? Hast thou no counsellor, that thou art so changed by sadness?" His presence and these words created in her an impression that she was kneeling in the community Chapel, in her accustomed place; but she was clearly aware that she had not stirred from the dormitory. The Master said further: 'I will save thee, I will deliver thee; fear not." And He gave His hand in ratification of His words. But there seemed to spring up at once, separating Gertrude from her new-found Friend an interminable hedge, bristling at the top with thorns too sharp to be surmounted. She recognized, without delay, that it was her sins that took this barrier-like semblance before her eyes; she wept over their result, and with great longing, yearned for the Presence that was

hidden by the thicket. At once, she was again aware of His hand grasping hers, and now perceived on it, the scar of the nail-wound.

From that Monday evening, until her death, some forty years later, the Master never left her, save for one period of eleven days, as the result of a worldly conversation in which she had indulged. Her sin brought with it the usual blindness, so that she was not aware of her loss. But on the eleventh day, her heart was touched by a prayer, and in finding her Friend again, she found at the same time, that she had withdrawn herself from Him.

Gertrude very modestly and very carefully qualifies her words about the Master's continuous presence with her. She does not say that she was always aware of Him, or that her perception was at all times equally clear. She means that whenever she looked for Him, she found Him. She admits that she was not always looking, and that for the one period of eleven days, her disobedience, her aversion, had expelled Him. There were times, too, of clearer and of dimmer sight, times of silence, and times of brief speech. But, whatever her distractions (she accuses herself of many), "after some hours, after some days, and, alas! I must add, after whole weeks, when I return into my heart, I find Thee there; so that I cannot complain that Thou hast left me even for a moment."

Modesty, reserve, soberness are the qualities that impress us in Gertrude's narrative. Those characteristics predispose one to credit some of the extraordinary demands she makes upon our belief—demands that might be entirely disregarded, if her narrative were, throughout, a tissue of marvels and miracles like those in the other four parts of the volume. One such extraordinary demand is the statement that she writes in obedience to the Master's express wish, and that He suggested, day by day, the form of her narrative. A statement of so extraordinary a kind should not be dismissed, either with "yea" or "nay," without some examination as to its possibility and probability. Thoughts that influence to a favourable consideration of her words are, first, her recognition of an ulterior motive in the Master's mind. She did not believe (as her associates in the convent did) that the Master came and spoke to her by reason of her merits and as a reward of the same. She felt that He wished to give some further teaching, some knowledge of Himself to the world, and that, for that purpose, He chose her as an instrument; in her own judgment, He could have found among His professed servants, no one more unsuited than herself. She did not at all plume herself as a specially favoured, and specially worthy object. Secondly, she was unwilling to write; and her unwillingness proceeded from the fear of misrepresenting the events she would have to describe. She realized how easy it would be to put herself first in the narrative, and the Master in second place—to make her personal delight seem His end, rather than the manifestation, to a hard-hearted world, of His intensely personal Humanity. Thirdly, the soberness and moderation of the narrative does seem, in comparison with what we may call St. Gertrude's own composi-

tions, namely her *Exercises* and *Prayers,* a *suggested* soberness. In her *Exercises* and *Prayers* she is addressing the Master, not the world; and she speaks *à toute bride.* She does not have to win His ear and heart, His credence, as the world's must be won. To win credence from the world, some things need to be suppressed, the tone lowered, and drab laid plentifully over gold.

Nothing spectacular, nothing in the nature of a "vision," nothing that at all recalls the frenzy of the ancient prophetess of the tripod, is meant by the statement that the Master gave directions about her narrative. Her account of this particular incident is very quiet. She had, it seems, for some time been weighing the *pros* and *cons* of writing down her experiences. Finally, she decided against the project, and planned to give herself to other occupations. The very day she so decided, these words were said to her: "Be assured that you will not be released from the prison of the flesh until you have paid this debt which still binds you. I desire your writings to be an indisputable evidence of My Divine goodness in these latter times, in which I purpose to do good to many." These words overcame her repugnance. But there was another difficulty—how describe her *intimate* experiences without giving scandal to the world. At this point it was intimated that she would receive guidance in her writing. It was guidance very direct and very simple: "for four days, at a convenient hour each morning, Thou didst suggest with so much clearness and sweetness what I composed, that I have been able to write it without difficulty and without reflection, even as if I had learned it by heart long before; with this limitation, that when I had written a sufficient quantity each day, it has not been possible for me, although I applied my whole mind to it, to find a single word to express the things which on the following day I could write freely."

The experiences of which she feared to speak for fear of scandal, are no other than such as mark most intimate human relations. Yet people today, people who esteem themselves entirely reasonable and balanced, are scandalised by her words, and they speak, reprovingly, of St. Gertrude's "continual love-affair." What is there objectionable or scandalous in the following paragraph: "I render thanks to Thee, through the union of mutual love which reigns in the adorable Trinity, for what I have so often experienced, and that Thou hast deigned to favour me with Thy caresses; so that while I sat meditating, or reading the Canonical Hours, or saying the Office of the Dead, Thou hast often, during a single Psalm, embraced my soul many times with a kiss, which far surpasses the most fragrant perfumes or the sweetest honey; and I have often observed Thou didst look on me favourably in the condescending caresses Thou didst give to my soul. But though all these things were filled with an extreme sweetness, I declare, nevertheless, that nothing touched me so much as this majestic look of which I have spoken. For this, and for all the other favours, whose value Thou alone knowest, mayest Thou rejoice for ever in that ineffable sweetness surpassing all comprehension, which the Divine

Persons communicate mutually to each other in the bosom of the Divinity."

The culminating experience, as recorded in her narrative, seems to be a very close and clear sight of the Master in outer form, not "dimly as at dawn" or through a cloud of light, but so minutely and plainly that His eyes and features were perceived. "A marvellous and inestimable coruscation illuminated my soul with the light of Divine revelation, and it appeared to me that my face was pressed to another face, as St. Bernard says: 'Not a form, but forming; not attracting the bodily eye, but rejoicing the heart; giving freely gifts of love, not merely in appearance but in reality.'

"In this most enchanting vision, Thine eyes, bright as the solar rays, appeared opposite to mine, and Thou alone knowest how Thou, my dearest Lord, affected not only my soul, but even my body and all my strength. Grant, therefore, that as long as I live I may prove myself Thy humble and devoted servant.

"But even as the rose is more beautiful and gives forth a sweeter fragrance in the spring, when it flourishes, than in the winter, when it is dried up, and, like the remembrance of a joy that is past, rekindles in us some pleasure to think of it, so I desire, by some comparison, to declare what I felt in this most joyful vision, to extol Thy love, so that if those who read this receive similar or even greater favours, they may thereby be excited to acts of thanksgiving; and I myself, by recalling them frequently, will inflame the negligence of my gratitude beneath the rays of this burning-glass. When Thou didst display Thy most adorable Face,—the source of all blessedness, as I have said, embracing me, unworthy,—a light of inestimable sweetness passed through Thy Deified eyes into mine, passing through my inmost being, operating in all my members with admirable power and sweetness: first, it appeared as if the marrow were taken from my bones; then, my flesh and bones appeared annihilated; so much so, that it seemed as if my substance no longer had any consciousness save of that Divine splendour, which shone in so inexplicable and delightful a manner that it was the source of the most inestimable pleasure and joy to my soul."

The narrative discriminates clearly between experiences in which individuals of the spiritual world are brought within the range of her perception (besides the Master, she relates that angels and saints visited her at times), and such subjective experiences as are the fruit of meditation. The following paragraph, even the most unwilling reader would admit, is concerned with nothing more than might happen to any one who broods intently upon some passage of reading, or a picture, or a beautiful landscape. "It happened on a certain day, between the Festival of the Resurrection and Ascension, that I went into the court before Prime, and seated myself near the fountain,—and I began to consider the beauty of the place, which charmed me on account of the clear and flowing stream, the verdure of the trees which surrounded it, and the flight of

the birds, and particularly of the doves,—above all, the sweet calm,—apart from all, considering within myself what would make this place most useful to me, I thought that it would be the friendship of a wise and intimate companion, who would sweeten my solitude or render it useful to others, when Thou, my Lord and my God, who art a torrent of inestimable pleasure, after having inspired me with the first impulse of this desire, Thou didst will to be also the end of it, inspiring me with the thought that if by continual gratitude I return Thy graces to Thee, as a stream returns to its source; if, increasing in the love of virtue, I put forth, like the trees, the flowers of good works; furthermore, if, despising the things of earth, I fly upwards, freely, like the birds, and thus free my senses from the distraction of exterior things,—my soul would then be empty, and my heart would be an agreeable abode for Thee."

The *Prayers* and *Exercises* are St. Gertrude's exclusive work, though that adjective must not be thought of as applying to the Holy Spirit; His presence pervades her prayers. The word exclusive is used, however, to mark the difference between these little volumes and the narrative that was suggested to her in the manner already mentioned. The reserve and restraint that, for a definite purpose, it would seem, characterize the narrative, disappear. The prayers are prolonged raptures, lyrical utterances. The nearest approach to them, in secular literature, is the poetry of Gertrude's contemporary, Dante. As in the *Divine Comedy,* so in these prayers, there is a mingling of colour, sound and fragrance. These qualities seem to proceed from some force higher, on the scale of being, than human. Here is part of a "Prayer to Jesus":

"Hail most loving Jesus, life-giving Germ of the Divine Honour, unfading flower of human dignity, my consummate and my only salvation. Thou art my Creator and my Redeemer, and Thou has so loved me as to leave all Thy bliss and Thy glory, and to purchase me for Thyself with the anguish of Thy death.

"O Thou most excelling King of kings, Prince of glory, my loving Jesus, thou art the life of my soul; may all the affection of my heart be inflamed with the ardour of thy love, and for ever united to thee. May it sink back baffled and exhausted when it would love aught but what tends to thee alone; for thou art the brilliance of all colour, the savour of all dainties, the fragrance of all odors, the charm of all melody, the soothing repose of all love. O thou overflowing abyss of Divinity, in thee is pleasure most enrapturing, from thee ever-gushing streams of plenty spread around, towards thee a gentle force irresistibly attracts, through thee our souls are inundated with thrilling gladness. O King of kings most worthy, sovereign Lord of all, Prince most glorious, most clement Ruler, thou most mighty Protector; thou art the vivifying germ of human dignity, O most wonderful in Thy working, gentlest of Teachers, Wisest in counsel, most kind and effectual Helper, Friend faithful unto death. No union is so intimate, so beatific, as thine, O thou transporting, soothing Lover of souls, most tender and chaste Spouse

of thy chosen. Thou art the spring Flower of noble gracefulness, O my brother most fair, ruddy, and comely in thy youth, most winning companion, Host most munificent in thy provision; I choose thee in preference to all creatures, for thy sake I renounce all pleasure, for thee I run with joy to meet all adversity, and in all I do I seek no other praise than thine. I acknowledge with heart and mouth that thou art the root from which these and all good things spring. With the energy of thy fervour I unite my intention to that of thy most availing prayer, that in virtue of this divine union every movement of rebellion may be quelled and crushed within me, and that I may be led by thee to the summit and pinnacle of perfection."

The quasi-rubrical comment upon these prayers says that while St. Gertrude was offering them "she seemed to see them under the form of roses hung around with golden bells, the fragrance and tuneful harmony of which touched the Sacred Heart with ineffable delight. Those which had been recited with devout intention gave forth a most ravishing melody, while those which had been said carelessly uttered a low and wailing sound."

The *Exercises* surpass even the foregoing prayers, in their aspiration, rapture and wonder of lyrical expression. They are of that order of literature upon which it is impossible to comment. Upon reading it, one either blazes with reverent admiration, or turns coldly away in aversion and dislike. Portions from one of the *Exercises* will be given here, in conclusion, in proof of the statements made about Gertrude's heights and depths, and also, if it were possible, to lead readers to familiarize themselves with these two devotional volumes.

The *Exercises* are a set of devotions to cover the period of a week. They include the whole inner experience of an incarnation, from Baptism to Death. Portions of the Fifth Exercise, "Acts of Love to God," are here extracted. The Editor writes in a preface:

"The aim of this Exercise is to excite in the Christian soul the dispositions necessary for fulfilling with the utmost possible perfection the first and great commandment, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God.* The seraphic soul of St. Gertrude reveals itself therein without reserve; and it is scarcely possible to hear her express the transports of her love for the Supreme Good without being moved, and without asking ourselves how we fulfil the obligation of loving the infinitely good God, who has condescended to reveal himself as our last End, and to draw us to himself in ways so manifold and so marvellous.

"In this lofty lyric the depth of the thoughts is as striking as the beauty of the poetry in which they are expressed, and St. Gertrude is always and unconsciously sublime. But in her school we have other work than to admire merely. It is no barren speculation that she brings before us. She teaches us by her example how we ought to love God, who is our first Beginning and our last End—God, who hath first loved us—God, our Mediator and our Redeemer, the Spouse of our souls.

"And if by reason of our frailty we cannot follow her to the heights whereon she already possesses the Object of her love in the most intimate union to which the creature can attain on earth, let us at least gather up the crumbs which fall from the table of this queenly bride of the great King. Her transcendent holiness enabled her to love more than others; but there is not one among us who is not called to love God with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his strength."

The Exercise is composed of three parts, a long prayer, for the morning, for midday, and for evening; shorter prayers for the Canonical hours (6 a. m., 9 a. m., etc.) and brief ejaculations for use between these stated periods of recollection. It should be carefully noted to how great an extent St. Gertrude speaks of the *beauty* of the spiritual life. One of the Dominican writers has aptly said that "Beauty is the smile on the face of Truth." The following sentences are from the morning prayer: "O my Love, who dost not only enlighten but deify, come unto me in all thy might; come and gently melt my whole being. May all that is of me be destroyed utterly; may I wholly pass into thee, so that I may no more find myself in time, but may be already and most intimately united to thee for all eternity.

"O my Love, thou art that peerless beauty, thou that sovereign splendour, on which none upon earth can gaze, except as veiled by the wings of seraphim. O when shall I be renewed by the vision of thine incomparable loveliness? O thou morning star, who dost shine forth in thy supreme majesty with a radiance all divine, when shall thy light enlighten me?

"O beauty so worthy of love, when wilt thou make me wholly thine? O wouldst thou but send down on me one least and faintest ray! Then should I have a foretaste of thy sweetness, and anticipate the blessed inheritance which awaits me. O Flower of flowers, bend down thy face on me, that I may for one brief moment feast my eyes upon thee."

The prayer for midday contains the following petitions: "O that it were given me, miserable as I am, to rest but for one moment beneath the shadow of thy love! Then wouldst thou strengthen my heart with one of the thrilling, consoling words of thy mouth; then should my soul hear from thee the glad assurance: 'I am thy salvation; the sanctuary of my heart is open to thee.'

"O compassionate Love, why hast thou loved a creature so defiled and so covered with shame, but that thou hast willed to render it all fair in thee? O thou delicate flower of the Virgin Mary, thy goodness and thy tender mercy have won and ravished my heart.

"Let me not be confounded in my hope; but grant that my soul may find its rest in thee. Nothing have I met so to be desired, nothing known so to be loved, nothing have I seen so to be longed for, as to be pressed to thy heart, O Love, and to rest beneath the shadow of the wings of my Jesus; to dwell with him in the tent of his divinest love.

"O that it were given me to come so near to thee that I might no longer be near thee only, but in Thee. Beneath thy genial ray, O Sun of justice, all the flowers of virtue would spring forth from me, who am but dust and ashes. Then would my soul, rendered fruitful by thee, my Master and my Spouse, bring forth noble fruit unto perfection. Then should I be led forth from this valley of sorrow, and admitted to behold thy face, so long, so wistfully longed for; and then would it be my everlasting happiness to think that thou hast not abhorred, O thou spotless Mirror, to unite thyself to a sinner like me."

The evening prayer is like the final triumphant leaping of flames, transforming into their own pure essence the foreign substances they surround: "O love, whose kiss divine hath such sweetness, thou art that fountain after which my thirsting soul doth pant. Thine are all the transports of my soul. O thou boundless, shoreless Ocean, why delayest thou to receive into thy fulness this feeble, tremulous drop? All the desire of my soul, impetuous even in its calm assurance, is to come forth from myself and to enter into thee.

"O Love, who art very God, amidst the crash and ruin of earth open to my soul a sure refuge in thee. Cover it over as with a garment, encompass it that I may come and appear before the eternal Bridegroom with the wedding-garment and the dowry of mine espousals.

"O when wilt thou show thyself unto me, that I may see thee as thou art, and drink of thee with rapture, thou Fountain of life and my God? Then shall I slake my burning thirst, then shall I be inebriated with those living waters, whose fair source is the excellent beauty of him towards whom my soul aspires.

"O thou beauty most ravishing, when wilt thou fulfil this yearning desire? Then shall I go into that wondrous tabernacle where mine eye shall see God. But I am still at the portal, and my heart pineth and moaneth by reason of the length of its exile. When wilt thou consummate my bliss by showing thyself to me arrayed in all thy loveliness?"

The brief prayer for six o'clock in the morning makes a petition that she may become a "wise and understanding child" of Love. If St. Gertrude's prayers seem so far above us, or, possibly, so repellent, that we cannot appropriate them for our needs, may it possibly be that we have not made a start at becoming children?

SPENCER MONTAGUE.

How shall we rest in God? By giving ourselves wholly to Him. If you give yourself by halves, you cannot find full rest; there will ever be a lurking disquiet in the half which is withheld.—Jean Nicolas Grou.

WHY I JOINED THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

IN order to tell why I joined the Theosophical Society it seems necessary to give experiences both before and after joining. As a child I was taken to church and Sunday School regularly. In the little church I attended a very simple child-like faith was taught, and the Master was presented to us as our very best friend. As I grew older the very literal meanings I had given to the church teachings did not seem quite so plausible, nor did they agree with things I had observed outside of the church. Gradually my simple understanding and trust disappeared, until all that remained were outward forms of worship—the attendance at church, saying prayers and reading the Bible every morning. These had become a mere habit by this time. The prayers were entirely mechanical; reading the Bible was also done just to ease my conscience: I did not feel comfortable if I had not read one chapter a day, for I had been taught to do this when very young.

These forms were continued for some time, partly from habit, mostly from a fear of consequences; my belief in that side of my early teachings persisted longest. Later the absurdity of reading words with no thought as to their significance, and saying prayers that meant nothing, penetrated my consciousness, and it was with intense relief that I dropped all forms of devotion. In the meantime I had become interested in my studies and in reading, and also in "having a good time." I fluctuated from one to the other, always wanting something, though never knowing what I was seeking; not even conscious most of the time that I was seeking anything. At one time all my energies would be put into my studies; at another time, everything was sacrificed in order to enjoy life and amuse myself. The sciences were of special interest to me, and as the religious side of life seemed unnecessary, I was concerned only with the materialistic view of things, and tried to build up a theory of life based entirely on materialism. Naturally this view of life was very unsatisfactory. Try as hard as I would to make the most of things, there really was no incentive and no hope. Even then I envied the religious faith of some of my friends; it seemed so comfortable to take everything on faith and without wanting to know why.

After my so-called education was finished, I devoted myself entirely to my work, thinking that it, at last, was the goal for which I had been searching. I had a sentimental idea of wanting to aid my fellow beings, though again purely from the materialistic viewpoint; for to me no other side existed; so I took up "social work." I was now

brought into contact with the poorest people of New York as well as the more pitiable and destitute poor in some of the surrounding states. The poverty, ignorance, feeble-mindedness, disease and crime were unspeakably horrible and heartrending. There seemed no justice in the fact that a few could have everything and others nothing: that the lives of some could be filled with so much happiness and the lives of others with only unhappiness.

About this time I had been invited to attend a service in a small church in New York. I went merely from curiosity to see what kind of a church it could be that so attracted my friends and made them willing to give up their time to its service. The church breathed peace and quiet, and a something else which I could not define, but which seemed very real. It was a year or more before I went to another service there, although I did not forget that first service. About the same time some theosophical books and the QUARTERLY came to my attention, and I read them eagerly, though understanding very little of some of them. The doctrine of Reincarnation seemed very natural and the only possible explanation of much in life. Karma was harder to understand, but after my first T. S. meeting, where this subject was discussed, it seemed as if a new world lay open before me. In spite of myself I returned time and time again to the church services, much against my will, because I did not want to become too interested, nor did I want to be converted back to Christianity again: I was sure Christianity could never be of interest to me. I watched carefully to learn why the people, engaged in this work, were so unlike others in their attitude toward their duties and their pleasures.

I was still reading theosophical books, but I could not connect Theosophy and Christianity, and I was not able to do that satisfactorily until my study of Theosophy gave me some glimpses of insight into the meaning of the church's teaching, and into the spirit of the Life around which the church is centered.

For some time I had wanted to attend the T. S. meetings which I knew were held regularly. I had understood that only a few—those who could meet certain definite requirements—were allowed to go. So when a kind friend invited me to attend, I was delighted at the opportunity. I attended two meetings and I knew I must join. I was told that I could go to these meetings without becoming a member, but that was not enough for me. I felt that I must become a member as soon as possible. I asked permission to join and was most kindly received. When I joined I could not definitely state "why." I knew that that for which I had been searching for a very long time could be found there, and I knew that the T. S. stood for ideals far surpassing any I had found elsewhere. Since then I have discovered many additional opportunities and advantages in the Society, and am increasingly glad to be counted among its members: but as for

telling "why" I joined, *why* that inner compulsion was upon me, I do not yet understand it entirely.

One distinct barrier to my decision was the notion that each person who made application for membership was required to present with his application a careful statement as to why he wished to join. If his reasons were satisfactory, he became a member and his statement was published in the QUARTERLY. But even this ordeal could not keep me from joining; and, of course, I promptly learned the incorrectness of my notion. A. M.

WHY did I join the T. S.? As I ask myself that question, I feel as a traveller might who journeying to a far distant country is stopped and asked by what turnings of the road he has come. The traveller intent upon his goal and fully occupied with the difficulties that confront him and with the constantly widening vision before him, feels his starting point almost forgotten.

Looking back over the wide expanse of plain and lifting his eyes to the far distant mountain peaks ahead of him, that hem in his narrow footpath, he tries to recall in thought, the way. At times he has felt as he stopped to look around, that like a treadmill, the ground beneath him has revolved, that all about him is unchanged. He has, seemingly made no progress, and has wasted time and energy. Many times he has lost his way, and by painful effort has retraced his steps. Many times darkness has obscured it, as he stumbled forward. His heart has seemed to him at times, a heart of stone, and he wonders why he has not long since ceased to move, why he has not lain prostrate in the grip of circumstances and events.

What is it that constantly calls him in accents without form, but none the less ceaseless and compelling? Why, when bound by the sins of untruthfulness, impurity, pride, vanity, blindness and coldness, has he not long since been beaten? Why, indeed, except for the love of that Master, who loved him first, and never ceased to call him with the hope that he will hear, and turn his heart to Him.

He asks himself what was it that started him on his way? Was it because of those calling themselves brothers and sisters, whom he found living a life of self surrender and service? Was it that he might enter his name with that of his much loved friend? Was it that he saw that it must be, that journey for each soul out of unconscious to conscious union with the Master? Was there not also the feeling that Divine Love had breathed into him the breath of life and then forever after, through countless lives had fanned the spark, until step by step, his soul moved forward and upward through suffering, pain, disappointment, sin, towards repentance and a longing to love as he himself was loved?

Looking about he is amazed at the depth and breadth, the immensity of all that surrounds him; at the beauty unknown but dimly felt; and though he knows he has travelled only the merest fraction of the distance that lies between him and his goal, still he knows aspiration has again and again filled his heart, and on its wings has desire sprung into being. He knows he has determined, no matter what may later confront him as difficult or painful, that he must ever continue on his way; and there wells up within his heart the feeling of thankfulness that he is permitted yet another day in which to press on, even though his progress seems as nothing, and there rises to his lips a prayer that life may be lent him, till he find the entrance gates to the Divine mystery which shall at length unite him to the heart of Christ.

The traveller having looked back over the way in which he has come turns his face again towards his goal.

Did I choose to join the T. S. or was it my higher self, and Divine Love, conspiring together, that brought me into membership with a body whose study of religions, and whose wisdom and understanding, had made me able to see that beneath outer events there is always their source to be found in feeling and thought, and that Theosophy, apart from the society of that name, contains the divine wisdom underlying all religion, and therefore the Secret of life.

Churches never interested me, they seemed empty and unreal. God was so distant I could not find him. The contradiction in the explanations of Bible passages and careful avoidance of such passages which, except from a Theosophic standpoint have no explanation, left me unsatisfied as to the meaning of life.

Frequently I heard very excellent sermons on the Christian life, but the two most vital points were omitted, namely, Christ as living in His humanity exactly as after the resurrection, and how, definitely and concretely, to become like Him. Week after week would pass with no clearer idea of how to begin and with no consciousness of growing nearer to my ideal.

For instance to be told "love thy neighbor as thyself" might, from the ordinary church's point of view, lead one into sentimentality, or into indiscreet and harmful charity, or worse still, to an effort to regenerate the world. Into all three of which I fell.

From the discussions I heard in the T. S. and from the QUARTERLY I gained on this point, of "loving my neighbor as myself," the consciousness that only to the extent to which one has gained in will and character can one teach another, or help another.

Putting this teaching to the practical test, I began discarding all my past activities, conceits and preconceptions, and tried to become as a little child that I might in time find The Kingdom of Heaven which is within.

At first it was very discouraging to look back over years of activity, that had brought me no deep and abiding life and joy; to realize the

littleness of my conceptions, in the light of Truth as through Theosophy it unfolded before me.

There were also many personal problems and situations, so-called tragedies of life, but Theosophy made it possible for me to understand that in all things there lives and reigns an eternal law that has its source in love. How different all things appear when seen as under the law of Love, when events and circumstances are looked at as having been created by my own self-will, through all the many existences through which I have come to my present incarnation, and that Divine Love offers each moment, with what it contains, an opportunity for destroying some of the denseness and darkness that prevent me from being conscious of the spiritual world so close at hand and to which I am born as a child of God.

It is strange how loath we are to look upon life this way, and how easily we accept the groundless belief that we are spiritual just because we attend church, or read good literature or practise charity, or sentimentalize over, let us say, the Great War.

How unreasoning to call ourselves Christian or spiritual when we at the same time deny the conditions which Christ himself imposes—namely, to take up our cross daily and follow him; to deny self that He may live in us.

I was impressed deeply this summer with something I read from M. L'Abbe Ratisbonne's "Life and Times of St. Bernard."

It was an abbreviated account of a treatise on Grace and Free Will written by St. Bernard. After the statement, "all good owes to grace its beginning, its progress and its perfection," and the objection, "where then our merits, where our hopes?" St. Bernard continues, "Do you think to be the author of your merits, and to save yourself by your own justice, you who can not even pronounce the name of Jesus, without the grace of the Holy Spirit? Have you forgotten the words of Him who said, "You can do *nothing* without Me?" (*John* XV, 5).

And again, "This depends not upon him who willeth, nor upon him who runneth, but upon God, who showeth mercy? But, you will ask me, what then becomes of free will? My reply shall be brief, *It works out its salvation.*" (A purely theosophical point of view it seems to me based upon Karma and Reincarnation.) St. Bernard states that every good action supposes the co-operation of the human will with divine grace; and that the work of salvation cannot, therefore, be accomplished without the concurrence of these two things—grace and freedom—grace which *gives,* and freedom which *receives,* which admits, which acquiesces, which consents; so that to work out our salvation is to consent to grace (that is to place our wills parallel instead of across the Divine will).

"Nothing then but the will—that is, the *free* and *unconstrained* consent of the will, can make a man either happy or miserable, according as he turns to good or evil (choice of will to sacrifice the demands of the lower nature). This *consent,* therefore, is, with great reason, called free

will, as well on account of the inalienable freedom of man as because of the inseparable judgment of the reason which always accompanies its exercise. This consent is free in itself from the nature of the will; and is a judge of itself because of the nature of the reason. How indeed, could good or evil be justly imputed to him who is not free, since necessity serves as a lawful excuse in all cases? Now, it is certain that where there is necessity there is no longer freedom; that if there be no freedom there is no merit, and, consequently, neither reward nor condemnation. Every action which is not performed with the freedom of a voluntary consent, is destitute of merit. Hence, the actions of madmen, infants, and sleeping persons, are accounted neither good nor evil; because not having the use of reason, they have not sufficient light for the exercise of their will, nor consequently of their freedom. . . . For I say not that we have by freedom the *volition* of good or the *volition* of evil; I say only that we have simply volition, for the volition of good is a gift, and the volition of evil is a fault; but the simple act of volition is precisely that by which we are capable of good or evil. Thus, of ourselves we will; but it is of grace that we will what is good. . . . We are asked, in what do our merits consist? I reply that the concurrence of our will with the grace which justifies, is imputed to us as merit. As the regeneration, the reparation of our inward being *cannot* be accomplished without the acquiescence of our free will that acquiescence, that consent, constitutes our only merit. Thus, our merits are fastings (denials of the lower self), vigils (prayer, meditation), works of mercy (works of mercy truly understood), and all the other practices of virtue by which our inward man is renewed, day by day, in proportion as our languishing affections are *purified in the love* of *spiritual things,* and our memory, sullied by the memory of past sin (the extent of which we do not know in our blindness) is cleansed by the *holy joy which follows holy deeds.* These three things chiefly contribute to the renewing of the inward man—a right intention (motive), pure affections, the memory of good acts. But in as far as it is the Holy Spirit who works these good dispositions within us, they are the gifts of God; in as far, on the other hand, as they require the consent and concurrence of our free wills, they are imputed to us as merit."

A. W. F.

A soul cannot be regarded as truly subdued and consecrated in its will, and as having passed into union with the Divine will, until it has a disposition to do promptly and faithfully all that God requires, as well as to endure patiently and thankfully all that He imposes.—T. C. Upham.

THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE MORAVIAN CHURCH

THE story of the United Brethren is one of the most essentially romantic volumes in the whole library of religious movements. It follows the struggles of an heroic little church, which, through centuries of persecution and oppression, preserved its integrity against overwhelming odds; and which, when peace had at length been won in the land of its birth, proceeded with true missionary zeal to face the perils of uncharted seas, primeval forests and hostile savages.

At many points in its history it furnishes the material for a great drama, for the succession of heroes and martyrs, resolutely defending their faith against armed force or subtle craft is almost unbroken. It is so monotonously rich in tragic events that one can scarcely grasp the consecutive story as a whole.

Perhaps if we can first get a clear mental picture and some inner understanding of the valiant group which, in the year 1457 under the leadership of Gregory the Patriarch, resolutely shook the dust of wicked gay old Prague from its feet and fared forth to lay the foundations of the new faith; if we can in so far share their consciousness of imminent peril threatening them from both the church and the state, we shall realize what must have been the power of their faith, and shall have gained a vantage-ground from which to look back toward the obscure first causes of the movement, and forward to its ultimate accomplishment. With such a comprehension gained, we shall know why this tiny body of simple worshippers, isolated in an obscure hamlet of a remote land, became a living power in the deep life of the world; why the church thus founded proved a torch-bearer, passing on to others the clear flame of sacred fire.

If we focus exclusively on their little community of Kunwald in the first days of their retreat, it presents a picture of idyllic peace. The villagers, who were of the Utraquist faith, had welcomed them with open arms, for they came with no positive dogma to enforce. The defection from old Thein church and their march to this refuge in northernmost Bohemia had been but the visible protest of those silent men of action, not against the church but against the evils of the church. Their desire was to create within the church itself a center of right living and right thinking, modeled on the primitive church of the Apostles. They had rebelled against the spiritual ministrations of a debased and corrupt clergy; they had been shocked by the practice of simony; and they had been affected by the command to honor as in-

fallible a Pope, when the papal throne was being squabbled over by two and sometimes three rival claimants.

Oddly enough their direct awakening to these evils had come through a man whose character, when weighed in the balance, had been proven sadly wanting. This was the good Patriarch's own uncle, by name Rockycana, who for some years kept all Prague agog by the wonder of his eloquence. He had the great gift of oratory, and apparently he became so fired by the contagion of his own words that right roundly did he denounce the evils and corrupt practices of Rome, "lashing the priests with whips, and the Church with scorpions."

But he builded not only better than he knew, but better than he wished. There were men in his audience whom he converted heart and soul, not to his way of thinking, but to his way of speaking; and they, being plain and conscientious men of action, forthwith demanded that he head a movement to break with all the wickedness he had so vividly depicted. This he was by no means ready to do. He cheerfully confessed that they were quite in the right, but added candidly that should he join their ranks he would be reviled on every hand, and that he could not face such consequences. Thereupon the sturdier spirits in his congregation withdrew in a body and from among themselves chose Gregory as their leader, leaving poor craven Rockycana to repeat his high-sounding phrases to a dwindling audience sapped of all its hardihood.

But back of both Rockycana the preacher and Gregory the leader was the immediate influence of a man who was both fearless and eloquent, though with the pen rather than with the tongue. This was Peter Chelcic, commonly known as the literary founder of the United Fratrun.

Little can be learned of his life save that at an early age he turned from the career of a soldier, finding it contrary to the behests of Christ; that he was inclined to enter a monastery but recoiled in horror at the corruption he there discovered; and that eventually he returned to live hermit-wise on his little patriarchal estate where he wrote book after book and pamphlet after pamphlet, all in the vernacular. Many of his works are still preserved in the great libraries of his country, and are reckoned among the treasures of Bohemian literature.

His country's wrongs burned in his heart, but he was a man of peace through conviction, and he hated war like a Quaker. For the terrible ills of his age he had one cure—that men should return to the simple teaching of Christ and the Apostles. As Christ had submitted to Pilate, so should Christians submit to the government. But the union of church and state he denounced in fiery periods. He founded no party and espoused no sect, but he was a well-spring of moral force.

Little groups of men gradually began to take him as their spiritual guide, they adopted a special garb and became known as the Brethren

Chelcic. The movement spread, societies multiplied and quietly and imperceptibly there was laid a broad foundation on which the Church of the Brethren was soon to be raised.

Nothing whatever is known of Peter's birth, little of his life, and again nothing of his death. He did but "flash his lantern in the darkness." There only remain the witness of his direct influence and his immortal works. He it was who kindled the oratory of poor-spirited Rockycana; and it was his doctrines that had so permeated the minds of his countrymen that they were ready to defy both church and state for conscience' sake.

Yet really to understand the temper of the people and their eager response to the clarion call of such leaders, one must take into consideration the deeper causes inherent in conditions and environment.

In both Bohemia and the little sister country of Moravia the burden of the Roman church has always been galling. It is true that the very first establishment of Christianity had come from Rome through the Franks. But it had gained a slight and transient hold, and was practically blotted out when in the middle of the ninth century the reigning duke had thrown off the Frankish yoke, and in order to still further assert his independence of the Germans, decided to import his Christianity from the East.

So to Constantinople he appealed for teachers for his heathen hordes,—happy, peaceful heathen according to all accounts, with such Christian virtues as faithfulness and patience, industry and cheerfulness already developed by their pagan creed. Two very splendid teachers were granted him, Cyril and Methodius, who richly earned their title of "Apostles to the Slavonians."

They were men of the very highest endowment, deep insight and the most devoted lives. They trained the Czechs themselves as native priests; they gave to the world the Slavonian version of the Bible; they caused public worship to be conducted in the vernacular, and they established a national church. Throughout the length and breadth of the land the Christian religion was adopted in a pure and simple form. The people were taught a direct communion with God, a simple faith in Jesus Christ, and they were made to think and to examine their hearts and consciences.

But in spite of all this successful labor of the Greek Church, Rome still held that it was by right of priority her province, and upon the death of Cyril and Methodius she immediately proceeded to regain her lost ground. The ascendancy which she then obtained she held in increasing numbers for over five hundred years, but always and always it was an imposed authority, deeply resented by the people who faithfully clung to the teachings of their beloved Greek missionaries. The interdiction of the use of their mother-tongue in all religious ceremonies was cause of bitter discontent; and side by side with their resentment

against the alien religion was the patriotic resentment at the increasing power of the German invaders, and ever increasing number of German priests as part and parcel of the hated foreign influence. The outer expression of their hatred could be crushed under, but the deeper current ran dark and turbid, and the people at large but awaited the voice of a leader which should express their discontent, to spring into active revolt.

The country was thus by its very nature a hot-bed of religious discussion. From the very beginning there had been thought-producing friction. It is small wonder when her wandering scholars returned from England with some precious copies of Wycliff's Bible, and voicing Wycliff's attitude towards church and clergy, that the people flocked to the new standard; that for every convert which had been gained in phlegmatic old England, fiery Bohemia contributed her hundreds.

They were "ready and awaiting" for the doctrine that the authority of the Bible should be placed above that of the Pope; to deny all superhuman power to the clergy.

Then came John Huss. He at once set all Bohemia ablaze with the voice of prophecy and the tragic spectacle of his false trial and his heroic martyrdom. For twelve years he was the idol of the people, the boldest of reformers, the fieriest of patriots; the most powerful writer in all Bohemia. The ringing defiance of his last words: "Most joyfully will I confirm with my blood the truth I have preached," sounded the spiritual tocsin for his countrymen throughout all the land. The seeds which after his death sprang up here, there and everywhere, were for the most part the unguided efforts of dimly comprehending enthusiasts to follow his teachings. But all the sects—Taborits, Adanites, Utraquists and Waldenses—served to keep the question of religious purity and freedom of conscience a very vital issue. The doctrine each held may have been foolish and puerile, but the fact that they were live subjects had honeycombed the entire country with heresies and counterheresies, and had fixed it firmly in habits of free thought and free speech. They effectually broke the fetters of an iron bound theological rule, imposed from without upon the minds and consciences of the people.

All this was in the deep conscientiousness of those stern men—some of them perhaps allied with the Brethren of the Chelcic, some with brave bands of Waldenses, some with still other sects—who sat and listened to Rockycana's words, or perhaps we should say to the sentiments of Peter Chelcic voiced by the golden-tongued Rockycana.

And with this short survey of their past, we are ready to return once more to the peaceful valley of Krunwald. In the first days of their retreat, all that they had asked, they had received in abundant measure. They had been given their haven of refuge, liberty to read their Bible in their mother tongue, to pray in words which should,

comprehensibly to themselves, bear the content of their aspiration upward.

For the ordering of their communal life they depended upon the explicit letter of the gospel. They would take no oath; they would not go to law; they would offer no resistance to evil; and they would live to the best of their ability, honest, industrious and God-fearing lives. The management of their simple affairs was in the hands of their righteous leader, Gregory the Patriarch, and for a short time nothing beyond this was needed or desired. Their livelihood was won by the work of their hands. They tilled their fields, tended their smiling orchards and buried themselves in the workshop in an atmosphere of harmony and loving kindness, convinced that they had returned to the principles and practice of the Apostolic church.

But we must needs focus very closely indeed on the little community, and shut our eyes very resolutely to the world without if we would keep this impression of their idyllic happiness.

Just beyond the deep gorge which hemmed them in on every side, just beyond the range of the Glatz mountains, and just the other side of the hoary old castle of Lititz which hung over them on the other hand, was a world seething with religious enmity and strife. There was a jealous, vindictive, and well nigh all powerful organization eager to crush out every attempt to escape the iron bands of her rule; and there was a state which at the Church's behest was ready to turn the entire strength of her government against heresies and heretics. Rumors of the independent unorthodox proceedings of the Brethren were of course bruited abroad. King George was soon made to repent the leniency with which he had granted them the foothold in his domain and the machinery of both church and state was set in motion to crush out the existence of the heretics.

The first direct move was against the venerable patriarch himself. He had ventured on a journey back to Prague, and while there seized the opportunity to hold meetings among the university students. A warning reached them through friends of what might be expected and Gregory sanely advised them to disband, but in the excitement of the moment, the students felt themselves indomitably firm. "Let the rack be our breakfast," they cried with one voice, "and the torture chamber our dinner!" When all suddenly the half-expected authorities entered the room and haled them to prison, one by one they were subjected to the first of the trials they had defied,—and very quickly, one by one, the young hot-bloods betook themselves to their church and publicly renouncing each and all of their heretical tenets, swore allegiance to the only true church.

With Gregory the Patriarch the tale was quite different. He was by this time full of years and his bodily endurance was weakened. His wrist cracked under the strain and he fell into so deep a swoon that all

thought him dead. And while in this swoon he dreamed a dream which he was convinced was prophetic—a dream of a symbolically fruitful tree, of a protecting Master and of a happy and exalted people. This dream he cherished with faith till its ultimate realization in fact. It was his uncle John Rockycana who rescued him from the rack and who obtained consent from the king for the good old Patriarch to return to his people—a doubtful beneficence, for the valley of Krunwald had become the target of persecution. Four of the Brethren were burned at the stake, others were cast into dungeons, and the entire community was scattered throughout the forests and mountains of Bohemia. For full two years they led the lives of the hunted, without harbour or refuge. By day they did not even dare to build fires to cook their food. By night while their enemies slept they lived their true life of prayer and worship.

It would have seemed a quick matter to exterminate so small a band, and doubtless the church and the king both thought that their end would soon be consummated. The exact contrary proved true. As the fugitives wandered hither and thither in their efforts to escape, more and more people were witness of their simple goodness and piety. The little band shone as the clear light in the darkness of the land, and in ever increasing numbers they won new recruits. Evil report gave way before the constant spectacle of their blameless and devoted lives, until finally from very shame King George called off his soldiers and the Brethren once more emerged from hiding.

But now with increasing numbers they felt the need of a firmer organization and a more constructive policy. Happily they were still under the control of the good Gregory; and he enforced his discipline upon his willing followers with an iron hand. They chose from among themselves twenty-eight elders to enforce the law, and the law was the gospel literally interpreted; members were divided into three classes, the Beginners, the Learners, and the Perfect, and the Perfect gave up all their goods to the common cause; there were overseers to care for the poor, visitors to insure the purity of family life, and godly laymen to teach the scriptures. But they wanted an independent church and a priesthood of their own, for the Utraquists who had at first served their ecclesiastical needs satisfactorily were too closely allied with the oppressors to be longer brooked.

So to this end a Synod consisting of sixty Brethren was convened. Weeks were spent in prayer and fasting that when the designated day should arrive there might be a pure channel through which should flow the divine commands, for the council did not meet to discuss the advisability of founding an independent communion—as to that they were of one heart and one mind—but humbly, reverently to inquire the will of God. To insure freedom from their own desires the names of certain candidates were written upon slips of paper and together with

some blank slips were placed in a vase. These were drawn in suchwise that there was a quite possible chance of all receiving blanks, in which case the Brethren would have bowed to the verdict and deemed the time not yet ripe. But they were not doomed to disappointment; three of the candidates declared themselves chosen and with these three as their pastors the new church of the Brethren was established.

Still there was another and much more difficult problem to be solved. They ardently desired the sanction of the regular apostolic succession that their pastors might be recognized as priests in Bohemia. They were however unwilling to receive it from any tainted source, and not only did they abhor the Roman church, and even their old friends the Utraquists as descended therefrom, but ill-rumours had reached them of the Greeks in Constantinople and the Nestorians in India. They were well nigh in despair when they learned that among the Waldenses was a bishop of blameless life, who claimed a direct descent from the Apostles themselves. He gladly ordained one of their number, Michael by name, with the due laying on of hands, and Michael in turn ordained the three newly elected pastors as priests. Thus arose the Episcopal order which has been maintained unbroken by the Church of the Brethren to the present day. Whether the Waldensian claim to direct succession be valid is perhaps not to be proved, but the early Brethren rested happy in their belief.

With its emergence and consolidation completed we may consider the first period of its history at an end; and may fittingly conclude with the contented exclamation of Gregory the Patriarch when the Synod received its divine sanction. "Now do I see with waking eyes my vision—the fair meadow, the tree laden with fruit, the Master with his three faithful servitors—even as it was vouchsafed me to see it with the eye of prophecy while on the rack in the torture-chamber of Prague."

ANNE EVANS.

That piety which sanctifies us, and which is a true devotion to God, consists in doing all His will precisely at the time, in the situation and under the circumstances, in which He has placed us. Perfect devotedness requires, not only that we do the will of God, but that we do it with love. God would have us serve Him with delight; it is our hearts that He asks of us.—François de la Mothe Fénelon.

ON THE SCREEN OF TIME

"THE toleration you people have for the Church of Rome is more than I can understand," remarked the Visitor, rather testily, after another friend had expressed the keenest enjoyment of the extracts from letters of French priests which appeared in the October *Screen of Time*. "I grant you there were splendid things in those letters; but the fact remains that they were written by priests of that impossible Church, and I was surprised to see them given such prominence in the QUARTERLY."

The Visitor's outburst was greeted with considerable amusement. The Objector, finding himself neutralized, sought a way to preserve his prerogative. "If you imagine, my friend, that you hate Rome, I can assure you that your hatred is pale and impotent in comparison with the detestation of these people whom you are accusing of toleration. Only the other day, I heard the translator of those extracts assert that the Vatican is the lineal descendant of the Sanhedrim which crucified Christ. I think he made it even stronger by saying 'the perpetual re-ëmbodiment.' He said that Rome had always crucified or burned people before putting them on her altars, and that she had only put them on her altars in response to popular clamour—never on her own initiative. He is less consistent than you are, because it was admiration for those letters that led him to translate them; while you, very properly, would have excluded them as tainted. None the less, and no matter how illogically, he is ferocious in his detestation and, by criticism on such wrong grounds, you in fact only flatter him, totally without warrant."

"May I speak over my remains?" inquired the accused, feeling himself to have been sufficiently diagnosed and amputated. "Or would you two people prefer to adjourn to another room to fight it out, while the corpse explains himself to those who do not require the explanation?"

"Nothing you can say," replied the Objector, quite unruffled, "can alter the fact that you denounced Rome in one breath and lauded Papish products with the next."

"I suggest," retorted the translator, "that we now hear some serious-minded student of Theosophy on this subject."

No one wanted to be classed as serious-minded. The translator explained that he used the term only as the opposite of "frivolous," with a withering glance at the Objector; but he was obliged finally to withdraw his qualification, and to appeal to the Student as "plain Student," before he could elicit comment.

"I am a shade puzzled," said the Student. "The Objector is a member of the Protestant Episcopal Church, with considerable emphasis on the Protestant. He will sing hymns, from his authorized Hymnal, which were written, not by Pre-Reformation Catholics, but by modern

Romanists (if there be such a word)—by Faber, Adelaide Procter, Newman, and many others. And yet he objects to the publication in the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY of letters, which in the truest sense were poems, and he does so merely because they were written by Roman Catholic priests!"

"It is one thing in a church," the Objector protested—rather bewildered by the information thrust upon him—"and quite another thing in a magazine devoted to the cause of Theosophy."

"I grant you that there is a difference; but it seems to me that the QUARTERLY should be, and in fact is, by far the more Catholic of the two—using that word in its true meaning, which, as you know, is 'universal.' To imagine otherwise would be to misunderstand everything for which the Society has struggled since its foundation. How absurd to reject any good or true or beautiful thing, merely because it 'comes out of Nazareth'!"

"And yet," said the Philosopher, "I do not think that the prejudice against Rome should be dismissed as mere prejudice. People do not usually discriminate, and clearly it is our duty to try to do so. But when 'Rome' means the Vatican; when it means unscrupulous ambition for temporal power; when it means the use of religion for selfish and sectarian ends,—we must surely not only share the prejudice but believe that the great Christian Master himself abominates and bitterly deplores such perversions of his life and purpose.

"On the other hand, were our condemnation to include more than the facts justify; were we to ignore the incalculable benefits which members of the Roman Catholic Church, in spite of the Vatican, have conferred on the cause of religion in general, then it seems to me that such narrow-mindedness would be as lamentable, though not nearly as sinful, as the sins which are its excuse.

"The difficulty lies here: Rome, having so often broken the hearts of her saints when she has not tortured them physically, finally realizes that she can make capital out of them, and then invariably tries to monopolize their achievements, taking their glory to herself rather than giving it to Christ, to whom alone it belongs.

"It is not simply a question of the Temporal Power, as that phrase ordinarily is used. It is an ambition so sordid, so vulgar, so unscrupulous, that it works its way down into the smallest details of her administration.

"This lack of principle naturally becomes evident on a large scale whenever Rome confronts such a situation as the present world-war. She plays politics, balancing power against power, gain against gain. She does not stand for Christ, or for his uncompromising methods, regardless of consequences to herself, because that is not her habit or her real purpose.

"The consequence of this all-permeating and corrupting influence is that it has been made difficult to disentangle, from the net of self-seeking

that Rome has thrown around them, even such splendid movements as the devotion to the Sacred Heart. Unable to corrupt that movement at its source, she has succeeded in creating the impression that it is her own product. She persecuted Margaret Marie, through that unfortunate nun's Superiors; for nearly a hundred years the Vatican not only refused to recognize the devotion but stood deliberately in the way of its popularity; and then finally adopted both the movement and its originator because they had become too influential to suppress, and because a way was seen by which this pure devotion to the Heart of Christ could be used to tighten the grip of the Vatican on the waning affections of French Catholics.

"For these reasons it is impossible to dismiss as mere prejudice, the suspicion of Protestants when attempts are made to introduce into their churches even such universal symbols as the crucifix; though fortunately in that case there has been such wide use of it by non-Roman bodies—who, loving it, simply refused to allow Rome any longer to monopolize the central symbol of Christianity—that today it has ceased to be identified with any section of the church and has become the recognized property of all. The use of the crucifix, however, long antedated the Reformation. The symbol of the Sacred Heart is comparatively modern. It will be years before its use can be disentangled from its Roman web, and only those can accomplish this who are absolutely beyond the suspicion of Roman 'leanings.' When so-called Protestant churches adopt it, side by side with such purely Romish practices as the reservation of the sacrament, their action, instead of aiding, actually hinders the process of breaking down the illusion of exclusive proprietorship."

"I agree with the drift of your strictures," remarked the Ancient, "but it is only fair to speak of some more of the things on the other side of the ledger. No matter what the motive, so far as the Vatican is concerned, no one can deny that the Roman Catholic Church in this country is and for long has been the strongest barrier against Anarchy. And by Anarchy, I do not refer only to the lawlessness of mobs, but also and chiefly to the spirit of lawlessness, of rebellion, of discontent, which permeates all classes of our population. No matter how selfish the motive, or how mixed with self-seeking, Rome has preserved for us the ideal of obedience, of discipline, of order, which the Protestant bodies do not possess; for though we may try to gloss the facts, Protestantism originally was a Protest, an act of defiance, a rebellion, and it has never been able to escape completely from its heredity, which is neither all good nor all bad, but, like most of man's handiwork, composite."

"Incidentally," commented the Philosopher, "what you have just said is another instance of the way in which the high gods bring good out of evil. Even Germany, using discipline for her own aggrandizement

and for the ruin of her neighbours, has compelled both the British and French democracies to realize that they too must consent to discipline if they would win this fight for right against treacherous bullying and brutal deceit."

"Is it not true also," the Student suggested, "that we have to thank Rome for preserving the tradition of discipleship? She has rarely, if ever, ceased to advise others to become saints; she has urged them to try; she has insisted that it is possible. Even today, her public prayers, used by all and sundry, include appeals such as 'Lord, make me a saint.' Protestantism is not only incredulous; she rather resents the suggestion that any such efforts are needed. 'Grace is sufficient.' This has been taken to mean that all you need is to be 'good enough.' A rather smug piety, though not her ideal, is far too often the best of her product. Thanks to Rome, or, more accurately, to the Religious Orders, such piety has no standing whatever among informed Roman Catholics. No matter what their personal short-comings may be, they at least have high standards. Protestant standards in comparison are negative—Protestantism itself, as the Ancient remarked, being primarily a negation. Even in the matter of piety, it is with them largely a matter of *not* doing what most people do, beginning with things that obviously are wicked, and concluding with things which are counted among 'Satan's wiles.'

"My own belief is that Christianity today would be as thin as dish-water, if it were not for the contribution of members of the Roman Catholic Church. None the less, I agree with every word of the criticism of Rome which we have heard this afternoon."

"Do not forget either," the Historian added, "that when we speak of 'Roman Catholicism,' we use a term almost as vague as when we use the word 'Protestantism.' Uninformed Roman Catholics imagine that all Protestants think alike. Uninformed Protestants imagine the same thing about Roman Catholics. Anyone familiar with their literature knows the immense difference in outlook and in feeling between, let us say, an English, a French, and a German Roman Catholic treatise on prayer, or on theology, or on any other phase of religious belief and practice. The dogma may be the same; but the spirit is totally different. There are national churches within the Church of Rome, just as distinct in *character* as the Church of England on the one hand, and the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States on the other; but with this further difference, that the two last named churches are much closer in thought and feeling—owing to racial interblending—than are any two of the national divisions of the Church of Rome.

"My hope is that some day this fact will be recognized, even by Roman Catholics, and that the reorganization of that church, upon the basis of co-operating national bodies, will provide the means of escape from the Vatican incubus, and will also pave the way for the ultimate federalization of all the Christian sects."

"Meanwhile," said the Student, "I should like to suggest for the consideration of the Objector that his own Church, the so-called Protestant Episcopal, in spite of its afflicting limitations, ought to serve as conciliating centre between the Roman Catholic Church and the more hide-bound Protestant sects."

"Why?" asked the Objector.

"Because it already contains within itself the two extremes, the latter exemplified in yourself; the former in that other kind of fanatic who insists that the essence of Christianity is contained in the 'reserved sacrament' and in 'the sacrament of penance.' A Church that is sufficiently catholic to swallow two such bigots, is catholic enough to swallow almost anything, even the A. P. A., even the Vatican—once the Vatican were shorn of its spurious authority. They would continue to fight within your organism instead of outside it; but the tendency would be to catholicize both of them, because the pressure of the enveloping organism, combined with the pressure of contact, would demonstrate at last that the spirit of both is the same."

Rather hurriedly the Orientalist broke in. "It is curious," he said, "that in recent years many of the saints, canonized since the Reformation and formerly regarded as strictly Roman, have been accepted without protest by many Protestant authorities. St. Teresa is an instance of this. Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Methodists, express wholehearted respect for her spiritual experience. My personal belief is that this is one result of Madame Blavatsky's propaganda and of the formation of the Theosophical Society. It is an indirect result; but without that liberalizing stimulus, I am convinced that the world would not have become as catholic as it already is. Theosophy has taught us to look at the experience rather than at its label. Our prejudices have been jarred by the discovery that all the great religions have produced saints, whose inner experience has been practically identical. Vaguely perhaps, but still without question, educated people accept the fact that the experience and teaching of St. John of the Cross can be paralleled at most points by the experience and teaching of certain Sufis and Yogis. This has made it easier to recognize the underlying unity in the experience of those who have differed as widely in expression as have Wesley and Fénelon, Fox and Mother Juliana, Thomas à Kempis and Samuel Rutherford. We shall grow up presently, thanks always to Theosophy, into a true Catholicism. Cardinal Mercier, Archbishop of Malines, has done much to hasten this development. His Pastoral Letters since the outbreak of the war, have wrung admiration from the most bigoted of Protestants. It is only fair to say also that the attitude of the Anglican clergy with the British armies in France has in many instances greatly pleased and touched the French Catholic Bishops. But that counts for nothing in comparison with Cardinal Mercier's achievement. He is almost universally recognized as having produced the

greatest documents of the war. I wonder whether they are familiar to the readers of the *Screen.*"

"Now please do not incite the Recorder to quote any further from such questionable sources," protested the Objector, unconvinced and unperturbed by anything that had been said.

"'Questionable,'" replied the Recorder, "is some improvement on 'tainted,' though as a sign of grace I do not think much of it. However, I am prepared to compromise. I will ask the Philosopher to quote your own Bishops first. He was telling me yesterday about their recent Pastoral Letter."

"The 'House of Bishops' of the Protestant Episcopal Church," the Philosopher responded, "during their recent Convention at St. Louis, propounded a Pastoral Letter which has attracted no notice in the press and very little outside it: perhaps because it contains statements too true to be popular.

"For instance: 'Political expediency,' they say, 'may in war time require neutrality of the State, but it cannot hold in leash the sympathies of the individual citizen. A man cannot be passionless and retain his manhood. "No heart is pure that is not passionate, no virtue safe that is not enthusiastic." The fact that our Nation is not at war affords no ground for smugness, much less for self-applause.'

"Then this: 'God hates a godless and empty peace as much as He hates unrighteous war. Let it be sadly said that, in proportion to her swollen wealth, as figures show, America's contribution toward the alleviation of innocent sufferers in Europe is the merest pittance. A few have given lavishly even to the laying down of their lives, many in due proportion to their substance, the vast majority little or nothing.'"

"Good for those Bishops!" exclaimed the Youth. "There is a general impression in this country that America has fed Belgium since the outbreak of hostilities, and many an individual who has not personally contributed a cent, swells with satisfaction at the thought. Figures show that America has contributed one twenty-seventh of the total, and that England and France have had to give the balance at a time when they could least afford it. . . . But please do not let me interrupt you. I want to hear some more."

So the Philosopher continued to read: "'The wounds of Armenia, Poland, and Belgium still lie gaping to the sky and offer their dumb appeal to God and man. If America comes out of this day of world disorder richer in purse and poorer in manhood, she will invite, and bring upon herself, the penalty of a debased national life or even of losing her very soul. The peace that smothers the souls, is as ruthless and inexorable as the war that mangles the bodies, of its victims.'

"In their next statement they show a regrettable lack of discrimination; but I suppose they allowed for weak-kneed brethren who think that charity means blindness. This is what they say:

" 'The nations now at war, whom thoughtless people pity, have as much to teach us as we have to teach them. They rebuke our worship of comfort and money by their daily offering, upon a reeking altar, of life and treasure, in behalf of what each believes to be a spiritual ideal; they declare to us that intoxicating liquor which is so freely and carelessly drunk in our land is a national menace to be dispensed with at the cost of lowered revenue but with the gain of heightened virility; they teach us that food is the staff of physical life, not an invitation to daintiness or gluttony; they rebuke our spiritual poverty by the splendor of their spiritual eagerness, which out of their tragedy brings new visions from God and breeds new virtues in men; they shame our self-indulgence by a degree of self-sacrifice which is royal in that the priests that offer are the victims offered.'

" 'Lack of discrimination' is a very mild way of putting it," observed the Student. "It is simply folly for those Bishops to pretend, with one eye on an impossible neutrality, that Germany can be classed with the other nations, as the phrase 'The nations now at war' suggests. She offers up 'life and treasure' truly, but not in behalf of 'a spiritual ideal.' To say so seriously would be blasphemy. She gambled life and treasure in order to win more. (Call this 'the will to power' if you choose: it makes no difference). Having gambled, with the first throw against her, she has gone on gambling, in the hope of escaping final ruin. But the motive remains the same—the same damnable motive that has led her to drag Belgians, and women from northern France, from their homes into slavery. . . . And why try to soothe us with the statement that we have anything to teach Europe! What is there in our entire civilization that Europe ought to imitate?"

"Conversations like this!" laughed the Recorder.

"I think the Bishops felt the weakness of their position," the Philosopher answered, "for in the next paragraph they say: 'We well know that force, be it physical or moral, cannot by itself uproot evil; nevertheless we have no right to place in the same class all the belligerents, aggressive and defensive, in this or every war. There are even occasions when the cleansing of the temple of human life must be begun with scourge and driving power.' "

"Such statements, from such a source, should have great weight," remarked the Orientalist; "because certainly the assembled Bishops, in a Pastoral Letter which, so far as anything can, commits their whole Church,—speak only after most careful and mature consideration. They are very moderate in their expressions, but that is to be expected. You may be certain that there is fifty times more feeling among the rank and file of the clergy than that which is voiced by the Bishops."

"I know it," replied the Philosopher. "And if only for that reason, though also somewhat in deference to the Objector's prejudices, I should like, before the Recorder quotes Cardinal Mercier, to give you an extract

from a Baptist minister's sermon on Thanksgiving Day, as reported in the New York *Times* of December 1st. He said (it was Dr. F. M. Goodchild at the Central Baptist Church of New York):

" 'We can hardly thank God for our prosperity, for we are fattened by the impoverishment of people who are as dear to God as we are.

" 'We can hardly thank God for peace. We certainly cannot if we have peace, as many believe, at the cost of national honor. We cannot thank God for the security of American life and property, for many Americans have lost both during the year, and, so far as the public can see, no steps have been taken to prevent a repetition of such outrages or atonement for those already committed. We cannot be proud of our championship of humanity. We had our chance to promote the cause of liberty and befriend humanity, but we let the chance go by unused.

" 'We can at least be grateful for this—that when we are bidden to be absolutely neutral as between a right cause and a wrong, we do not have to obey. We are still free to do our own thinking and keep our own consciences unsullied. When the moral fibre of the whole nation is relaxed by those who are at the head of the nation, we can still make a moral protest against the delinquency and retain our own moral rectitude and help to stiffen the moral character of those about us.' "

"That is uncommonly well put," remarked the Student, cheerfully. "It all goes to prove that the original American stock, though dying, is not yet dead. The few who remain will in time be treated as relics and will be kept under glass. At present, though dying, there are too many of us to be interesting. No one pays the slightest attention either to us or to our opinions. Recently imported Poles and Slovaks and Italians and Germans and Jews and Russians, govern us through some Irish who select someone who is not Irish to represent them in Washington. But the original stock, or in any case the original genius, pipes up once in a while. Your Baptist minister makes me thankful: also a poem I read a few days ago in the *Tribune*. It is by Marion Couthony Smith and is entitled 'America to Belgium.' May I read it?"

All of us said 'Yes.' So he read aloud as follows:

"America to Belgium

"You who are bound with dragging chains,
Numbed and seared with a thousand pains,
Flung in the trail of the foe's mad lust,
Pressed by the goad of his dark desire;
You whose sword was a lightning thrust,
You whose heart was a shield of fire—
By your broken blade, by your shining deed,
Pity us, pray for us, you who bleed!

"We who have seen and praised your power,
Yet stayed our hand in your crucial hour;
We who have lost, through sordid fears,
The lifted spirit, the singing breath,

The gift and guerdon of nobler years,
The eyes that see beyond woe and death—
Your palm and crown have passed us by;
Pray for us, pity us, we who die!

"We who have known the splendid dream,
We who have watched its fading gleam,
What shall bring us the kindling word
Free us from blindness, smite us with dread?
Though, by your glory and anguish stirred,
Humbly we bring you our dole of bread—
Greater the gift your soul can give;
Cry to us, waken us, you who live!"

"If you keep on like this," said the Objector, "you will have us all so chastened that there will be nothing left but a tear."

"Some of us might do better," murmured the Recorder. "But now for the Cardinal. I am going to ask the Student to tell us about him."

The Student was full of his subject. "I was at a meeting last night," he said, "at Carnegie Hall—a full house in spite of very bad weather. Mr. Elihu Root spoke. Also Judge Alton B. Parker, Mr. Beck and others. The Rev. Dr. Manning of Trinity presided. The meeting had been called to protest against the deportation of Belgians and to call upon the Government of this country to act. When Dr. Manning referred to Cardinal Mercier, the whole audience rose to its feet and cheered. It was a remarkable demonstration. Admiration for his courage, sympathy with his distress, reverence for his sanctity, were mingled with the realization that he speaks, while King Albert acts, for the soul of the Belgian people: and it gave everyone an opportunity to execrate Germany which is what we were there to do. As remarked more than once in the *Screen,* if you love righteousness you have got to hate evil. You can never hate evil enough. It is a totally different thing from hating your enemies. One knows that Mercier abominates evil; and yet he despises it, for he knows it cannot triumph in the end. That is one of the things that people instinctively revere in him, even when they do not understand: they feel his deep compassion, his unutterable distress; but they also feel that he looks down upon the things of time from the vantage ground of eternity. He can wait.

"See how he speaks of eternity in his Pastoral Letter of the first Sunday of last October:

" 'That you die young or old, in bed or on the field of battle, far from or near to your relatives, what does that matter? That your days pass tranquilly in your own loved home, where happiness abounds, where friendship and esteem surround you, or that you have lived in tribulation, in solitude, in misery, perhaps, or under the weight of defiance, humiliation, oppression; at the very end, what does that matter to you? How will you look back upon these minor details of life when you shall review them in eternity?

"'Whatever happens to you, there is in you something which no person or no thing can touch—that is your soul. And this soul which is yours, of which you are the master, is made to commune with God, and it will commune with God, if you desire it; it will embrace Him and will be embraced by Him, not in the ephemeral course of the life of a man, or of a historical period, but eternally, forever, forever.

"'My brethren, raise up your eyes, then, I pray you, and keep them fixed on this Polar star of your eternity. And then you will see all created things disappear in the shadow of nothingness which the Scripture, that other direct and personal voice of God, calls a smoke that floats and disappears, a cloud that is dissolved, a shadow that flees, a flower that falls to pieces, a wave that flows back into the ocean.

"'Eternity!

"'My brethren, we all lack the courage to face it, even for a moment. Embrace it as much as you can, hold it fixed in your imagination for the space of an hour, a half hour, a quarter of an hour; direct your thoughts to it. During this quarter of an hour, see only it and God, your Creator, your Saviour, your Judge in it; have the will power to forget, during this brief time, all else but it, and you will arise, enlightened, imbued with its spirit and determined.

"'I told you, my brethren, in opening this discourse, that God spoke to us both without and within; without by the voice of nature or by history; within by the breath of the Holy Ghost.

"'Do you wish to know why eternity, which means so much, affects you so little, while present events weigh so heavily upon you? It is because you have leisure for everything and you do not wish to adapt yourself to the only thing which is worth the trouble. You do not know how to turn your thoughts from earthly things to pious meditation.'

"See also what he says about war—one of the most lucid statements on the subject I have ever read:

"'Wars,' he writes, 'should not disturb the peace of mankind. In the original design of Providence the passions were subject to reason and should never be raised as an obstacle to the concord of families or nations; but sin disturbed this generous plan, and in its steps disorder entered history. Pride and cupidity disturb the equilibrium. Their repression, and defence against them by arms, are necessary to the re-establishment of equilibrium.

"'Wars have become inevitable, and so long as there shall remain on earth men guilty of allowing passion to dominate reason, universal pacifism will be a chimera. Nay, more, to desire peace for the sake of peace, peace at any price, would be to accept with equal indifference right and injustice, truth and falsehood. It would be cowardice and impiety.'

"Then, crying, *Haut les cœurs!*, he calmly considers how best to profit by 'our affliction and the crimes which occasioned it.'

"His Pastoral Letter of Christmas, 1914, on Patriotism and Endurance, is probably too well known for quotation. It should be in the library of every student of life and history. It is perhaps the greatest of his letters on the war. (It can be obtained directly, or through any bookseller, from Burns and Oates, 28 Orchard Street, London.) But his second letter, addressed to the German Governor-General in Belgium, so far as I am aware, has not been noticed or reviewed in this country. Its quiet scorn reveals a world of tragedy. Its opening words tell the whole story:

"'M. Governor-General,—A communication of your Civil Administration informs us that the German Government offers to give effect—in the occupied portion of the country—to the payment of the emoluments of the clergy, beginning with the 1st of September or the 1st of October, 1914; on condition that the members of the clergy sign a declaration binding themselves to undertake nothing and to combat everything which can be prejudicial to the German Administration.'

"They were asked to wear the German uniform—or starve. A crude and open bribe, of which the Germans, as usual, were totally unconscious and probably still are.

"'In my diocese alone,' the Cardinal had written, 'thirteen priests or religious were put to death . . . To my own actual personal knowledge, more than thirty in the dioceses of Namur, Tournai, and Liège.' Was it out of 'consideration' for the Belgian priesthood—present deportations are purely humanitarian, we are asked to believe—that this offer of money was made! See what magnanimity: that out of the millions wrung from Belgian tillers and traders, Germany offers to give back a few thousands to Belgian priests—on conditions! 'Woe unto you, hypocrites: for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves. Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?' And so the Cardinal told them, not in those words, but quietly, politely, and rather in what he left unsaid than by any direct statement. His Master had said it for him, long ago!"

"You take back all your criticism," said the Objector.

"I have not taken back one word. Mercier is far bigger than his Church: a real man always is. But you have missed the point of our discussion. It is not a question of Rome on the one hand and of Protestantism on the other. It is Theosophy which, understanding both, can sympathize with both,—taking, appreciating and using all the good that both contain, while keenly alive to their defects. Just as a real man is bigger than his Church, so Theosophy is not only bigger than any Church, but bigger than any one Religion. It includes them all—includes, because it is the source of all the religion in all Religions. Theosophy means Divine Wisdom. Just as Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, and the other great religions, are different expressions of Divine Wisdom, so Protestantism and Roman Catholicism are different expressions of Christianity, and therefore of Theosophy." T.

ELEMENTARY ARTICLE

XIII

Sacrifice

THE laws of the spiritual world are often expressed by paradoxes, which are statements that at first sight seem contrary to common sense, or ascertained facts, but which can be explained and shown to be true. The Bible is full of them and St. Paul was especially fond of them, as for instance, "As unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things (*II Cor.* vi. 9, 10).

An understanding of what a paradox is, and why it can be true, throws a flood of light on the very important phase of the spiritual life with which we are immediately concerned; and, *per contra,* it is often difficult to explain some spiritual law or fact except in terms of paradox. *Light on the Path* says, "When he becomes a disciple he finds life is describable as a series of paradoxes." There is a fundamental contradiction which runs through life and which makes for confusion until it is resolved. The problem, or the task, of discipleship is to resolve that contradiction.

Man is both a friend and an enemy to himself; he has two natures which are opposed to each other, and which are, and should be, in perpetual conflict. What is true of one, is not true of the other, yet man having both natures, can have contradictory statements made about him, and both may be true. When St. Paul says, "having nothing, yet possessing all things," we know that the first phrase refers to the things of the lower Self, valued by the natural man, which the disciple has given up and no longer possesses; while the second phrase refers to man's spiritual life which is "possessed by all souls equally." When the disciple inherits eternal life, he acquires possession of "all things." So it is perfectly true that we can have nothing (in the material sense) and possess all things (in the spiritual sense). We die to self and live to Self.

This is not a dissertation upon rhetoric; I am interested in the paradox only because it helps to explain a stage of discipleship; that stage where we are the battleground of the two natures within each one

of us. This fact is clearly enough understood, for it is within our personal experience; but some of the consequences, and some of the laws which govern this stage of progress are not so obvious, and are not so clearly understood. One, and a very important one, has to do with sacrifice. We hate the word and shrink from it instinctively. It has a forbidding, ominous sound; and when some one speaks, or we read, of the "joy of sacrifice," it sounds like nonsense or a contradiction in terms. It is a paradox, a statement which seems contrary to common sense, but which can be explained and shown to be true.

Let us take a very simple illustration. A drunkard is finally persuaded to give up drinking. He has a very hard struggle for a long time; suffers intensely, and misses his alcohol with every nerve of his body and some parts of his mind, and *sacrifices* his comfort, his pleasure, his accustomed habits of self gratification. But he fights the good fight to a successful conclusion and emerges from the battle freed from his besetting sin. Is he sorry? Does he think or talk about what he gave up as a *sacrifice?* Do we so think of it? Does any one suppose for a minute that, from any point of view, the whole thing was not worth while? Yes, there *is* one point of view from which the achievement was a defeat; the drunkard's animal-self, although conquered and controlled, would still long for the previous conditions. Now the actual fact is that we have the animal-self's point of view towards every kind of pleasure and gratification which contain within themselves anything incompatible with spiritual life, and which we have not yet given up. The great problem of the neophyte—his chief task—is to shift his point of view from the animal self to his higher self. He must see things as the reformed drunkard sees them, who does not look upon his efforts as a sacrifice, but as a successful effort which has resulted in peace and a much greater happiness.

The simple fact is that it is only when we look at the demands of the spiritual life from the lower standpoint that they seem to require a sacrifice. Once done, once we have conquered, the idea of sacrifice disappears entirely. No one is sorry for any self-conquest he has made. No one ever has reported that, *once completed,* it did not pay. The man who gives up smoking is always glad he gave it up. After the event, the effort to accomplish it seems a small price to pay for the fruits of victory.

I have used homely illustrations, but the same law applies with equal force all along the line. The spiritual life withdraws a little thing in order to give us a big one. What it withdraws seems big only when looked at from below; the effort to rid ourselves of it seems hard only when we are under its sway. It is one of the most pernicious "glamours" that befogs human intelligence and understanding.

Most people cannot free themselves from this glamour until they are satiated with experience. The hold of our lower natures is so

powerful and they fight so desperately for their "rights," for life and their form of expressing it, that few people can pierce through the veil of this illusion. Therefore nearly all religions, and notably the Christian religion, speak of sacrifice, and base spiritual life upon a law of sacrifice. But in reality there is no such thing. It is a man-made idea to describe the effort that must precede any worth while accomplishment. Does any one suppose that Jesus Christ thinks of His incarnation in Palestine as a sacrifice? We speak of it as the greatest of all sacrifices, and we call Him the Sacrificial Lamb, the Sacrificial Victim; but He must look upon it as a glorious fulfilment of His career. We see its horror. He sees its fruits. We are staggered at its pain. He wields its power.

But this theme is beyond us. Let us come back to things we can understand. A man wakes up to some appreciation of the realities of life; becomes interested in a Church, let us say, and gradually comes to feel that it is his duty to assist in the work. Heretofore he had spent his leisure as most people spend theirs. He went to the theatre, played golf, visited his friends, motored, read a little, mostly novels and magazines, and generally did those things he found enjoyable. Now, however, he finds the pull of his new interest incompatible with these previous diversions. Most of them were innocent enough; it is not that; but they took time, and now the new interests take time. There is an immediate conflict of desires. Usually the nascent interest in religion is not strong enough to withstand the pull of old habits. A fine day comes, and he chooses golf rather than church. But sometimes his new interest controls him and, with a sigh for the pleasure he forgoes, he does what he conceives to be his duty; he *sacrifices* himself for conscience sake. Often this stage lasts a long time. How long depends entirely upon the completeness of his purpose, upon its finality. Usually we vibrate and dilly-dally; we go part way, do not like it, and draw back. We continue to keep one eye on the flesh pots of Egypt, even while bracing ourselves to the doing of our duty. There is no doubt about this stage being soggy.

But even if we continue this half-way course, which nearly all of us do, an interesting and significant thing happens sooner or later. Golf and the theatre begin to lose their charm; their pull lessens; then, some day, like a flash, comes the full realization that we are no longer reluctant to go to Church or meetings, that, on the contrary, we look forward to them; they have become a pleasure. We are astonished to find that we actually *prefer* them to golf. It is no longer a sacrifice; our centre of interest, and attraction, has shifted; we, in ourselves, have moved from one term of the paradox to the other; we have completed a step in the spiritual life. Then we do the same thing over again with some other element in our lower natures. Most of us find it very difficult to get past the comma that separates the terms of the typical paradox; many find it a semi-colon; and, alas, for not a few it is a full stop!

Please, dear reader, do not consider what I have said above, to mean that you must forthwith eschew golf, motors and the theatre. My illustration bore no such implication. There is nothing wrong in these things; there is only wrong in their abuse. It is not wrong to eat. It is wrong to eat too much. A game of golf may be as innocent as a country walk; it may be the lure of the devil to steal a soul. I can imagine a Saint riding in a motor car without in any way damaging his saintliness. There are very few things which are wrong in themselves, and must forever be eschewed. Murder is wrong; the successful killing of one's country's enemies is a laudable act, honoured alike by man and God. It would be an interesting exercise to make a list of those things which must never be done in any circumstances because they are wrong in themselves. The evil in any act is likely to depend upon other elements than the thing itself. Why we do it, and how we do it, are the doors through which sin creeps in.

But let us return to our main thesis, that "sacrifice" is a name we give our feelings at a certain stage of progress, because of our lack of knowledge and understanding. Let us take still another illustration from our common experience, such as prayer. This is not a very good illustration, perhaps, because most of us are still on the wrong side of the comma. Most of us hate to pray and find it a bore; but we feel it to be a duty, so we "sacrifice" our time, our comfort, our sleep, our convenience, our inertia, and force ourselves to pray. We do not enjoy it and do not seem to get much, if any, of the fruits of prayer which we read about in devotional books and the lives of the Saints. We have, however, an immense body of testimony, from all times and all peoples, that prayer does bear rich and abundant fruit; we know the Saints not only reap a harvest from prayer, but that they learn so to love it that their superiors have to interfere to limit the time which they may devote to it. They say they get from it ecstatic happiness; their prayer time becomes the centre of their day to which they look forward with longing and desire. It would be difficult for them to realize what was meant, were they asked whether they minded "sacrificing" their comfort and convenience in order to pray. Therefore, in this case also, although we have not yet experienced it, we have irresistible evidence that what we picture to ourselves as sacrifice in order to pray, is, once again, only a misconception of the truth, as we may easily discover for ourselves if we persist in our efforts to learn to pray.

I cannot think of any step in the process of "giving things up," that does not come under this law. It covers all that stage which *Light on the Path* says requires the surgeon's knife. It does not take the element of pain out of the process. We have the assurance of universal experience that such efforts are worth while, that they pay a thousand times over; our intellects may be convinced, but our lower natures are so strong, and we are so much under their sway, that there must continue to be an element of suffering as we transfer our life and energy from

one plane to the other. The force which we have been pouring into our lower natures must be wrenched loose from its entanglements. That causes pain; but this pain must be endured, O disciple, so bend all the energies of your soul to the task. Sustain yourself, as you can, with the conviction that, not only is it worth while, but also that it must be done, as well now, as at any other time, for it will never be easier.

Why do we not do these things? We do not do them because lethargy and procrastination are two of the strongest weapons of the lower self in thwarting the efforts of the Soul; they are two forms of self-indulgence which we must "sacrifice" for the sake of our spiritual life, and as they are subtle and very deep rooted enemies, we may count upon a difficult struggle before we emerge on the other side, and discover, once again, that "giving up" our inertia was not losing something, but was acquiring a new and a very useful power.

C. A. G.

What you need to do is to put your will over completely into the hands of your Lord, surrendering to Him the entire control of it. Say, "Yes, Lord, YES*!" to everything, and trust Him so to work in you to will, as to bring your whole wishes and affections into conformity with His own sweet, and lovable, and most lovely will. It is wonderful what miracles God works in wills that are utterly surrendered to Him.*—Hannah Whitall Smith.

REVIEWS

The QUARTERLY takes pleasure in heartily recommending three charming and interesting stories by an anonymous author, Michael Wood. Two were published four and two years ago respectively; the last has just appeared. In order they are: *The House of Peace, The Double Road,* and last, *The Penitent of Brent.* Messrs. Longmans, Green & Co. are the publishers.

Michael Wood, despite the name, is probably a woman. She has an excellent command of simple, pure English. Her appreciation of Nature and of the Beauty of Life, and her ability to express this, rank her, when at her best, amongst poetic prose writers of the highest power in our literature. With an entirely different flavor and mould of thought, she irresistibly suggests Michael Fairless in the breath of peace and joy that pervades the atmosphere of her books. It is the peace that passeth understanding,—not of this world; it is the inner joy that is born with the birth of the Spirit in man.

This is the secret of Michael Wood's beauty and of her fascination,—for her stories are fascinating. She writes of, and at times from, the spiritual world—the *real* world. There can be no mistake about which is the real world when you have read these books. They take you back home, so to speak; you are no longer floundering between spiritual and material, between real and imitation; you are lifted into the world you knew after all was real, and you see how perfectly natural it all is.

How the author does this is hard to define. In part it is delicacy of touch and an innate refinement. Her descriptions of external things are seen with eyes that see,—that reveal what you have been yourself seeing all along,—only you did not realize it for yourself. In part also, it is the contagion of intense conviction. Michael Wood knows something of what she is writing about. Spiritual experience is more real to her than any other experience. The whole power of these books comes ultimately from what their author has actually lived.

The first book, *The House of Peace,* is a story of the power of contemplative prayer to win back wayward and erring souls to the Path. The hero, Gereth Fenton, spends his youth in a home where both parents get a living by dishonest gambling. His mother hires as his tutor a man recently discharged from jail for forging a cheque, thinking thereby to obtain for herself a useful accomplice. Larry Dexter, however, refuses to descend to this, and gradually gets himself hated by Mrs. Fenton. After eight years he is forced to leave, and drifts about impoverished for some time until Mrs. Fenton makes the opportunity to vent her hatred by fastening on him a theft she herself committed. He is jailed again. Mrs. Fenton bribes the jailor, who persecutes Larry mercilessly, finally getting him whipped. In the meantime Gereth Fenton, who owed his whole education, and has given his whole affection to Larry, gradually awakes to the realization that life is not all dissipation and wrong-doing; that there is a "within" world beyond everything of this world, yet at essence one with it. Through some friends he is directed to a little religious community, and very shortly the definite call comes to a life of contemplative prayer. The community have a few simple, self-imposed rules; Father Standish, the director, is the prime-mover and life of the place. Outside of the biographies of saints, I have nowhere met such a character. His wisdom, his theosophic tolerance, his enormous sympathy for all mankind,—and yet, together with such gifts, his simple humanity, his charming naturalness,

and practical understanding of men and affairs, is a picture that demonstrates not only brilliant character-drawing, but a deep understanding of the inner world on the part of the author. Father Standish is an attractive man; he compels love and admiration; yet he is essentially a religious.

Gereth Fenton prays for his friend Larry, of whom he can gain no tiding from Mrs. Fenton. After many years, one day he finds Larry accidentally near by, far gone in consumption, and about to commit suicide, because half crazed by his terrible experiences. He takes Larry to the guest house; and spends the night in prayer for his soul. The description of that terrific combat between the forces of hate and evil in and behind Larry, and the peace of Christ Jesus in the heart of Gereth Fenton, should give some pointers to people who scoff at the mission of prayer. Larry is saved and lives happily another nine months. Then Gereth prays for his mother; and before her death he wins her also,—but not before she undergoes terrible mental suffering. The book must be read to appreciate its power.

The Double Road has a less pleasing and less convincing plot. The hero voluntarily assumes guilt for a theft, and his consequent suffering and isolation open up the inner world to him. This gives him the power years later to bring the sinners to conversion, and particularly to cast out the demons that had finally possessed a man who for years had dabbled with psychism, to feed his vanity and deceive his acquaintances. The book in this respect has a truly theosophic message in making the distinction between false psychic experience, and that true relation with the other world which can alone bring peace and happiness into the lives of men.

The Penitent of Brent, Michael Wood's last book, shows a firmer hand, and if anything, better writing. Father Standish and the Community at Brent again figure prominently. The characters are clearly drawn, more by *nuance* and fine shades, than by direct description; and the plot has vivid interest throughout. There are less rough places in the story; and its development is more normal.

The power of true penitence, not only to purify an individual penitent, but as an irresistible uplifting influence for all who contact it, is the theme. Jesse Cameron, the hero, is not strictly speaking an ordinary criminal. He has a fine, high-spirited, tensely-strung nature; and is brought up under religious influence. His father is a hard, selfish, bad-tempered man, dominating wife, two children, and servants to the point of brutality. One of these last, discharged and then further injured by Mr. Cameron, while wandering in a negative state of mind about the house one night, becomes suddenly possessed with the idea of murdering his former master, and, obtaining a pistol, shoots the latter through the window as he sits in the library. Now on this same evening Mr. Cameron had become particularly enraged and brutal towards his daughter Monica, and had locked up the sensitive girl alone in a dark, and supposedly ghost-haunted room. Jesse, outraged and defiant, had been summarily ordered to keep off, and had retired to pray in the family oratory. There hatred had possessed his heart, and he had prayed for his father's death. Feeling suddenly that the evil prayer had received an answer, he goes in a dazed and almost crazed condition to the library where he knew Mr. Cameron to be. What happened he cannot remember; but when a more normal consciousness returns with the sound of the shot in his ears, and his father murdered, he finds himself morally convinced of his own intention and real responsibility through his prayer for the perpetration of the crime. But Lewis Carnoby, the actual murderer, gives himself up, confesses the crime, and is hung. Jesse, on the point of insanity, his story of his guilt believed by none, goes to Father Standish at Brent, and demands life-long penitence. To save his reason it is advised by the doctor to give it him; and Jesse lives the hard life of a farm-hand, with certain added ascetic restrictions such as isolation, silence, obedience and penitential services. Father Standish frankly played a part in administering this rigorous expiation; but when Jesse's determination to continue, when his actual

need for penitence becomes clearer as the months roll into years, the good priest begins to agree with a Mr. Allison (an independent visitor at the Community who has religious experience of a high order, and who befriends Jesse, winning his confidence) that somehow Jesse Cameron actually *is* responsible for the murder. Whereupon Father Standish makes Jesse's life even harder, meanwhile striving through prayer and religious discourse, to bring him to reconciliation with the Christ, and to the peace that passeth knowledge. Finally, as Jesse's inner self is forged into being by the united prayer and labor of his life, there does come complete vision and understanding, not only of the past events in their true light, but of the actual Karmic relations and immediate ties that bind all the characters of the group together. So also, by the uplifting power of his penitence he is able to melt his father's hardness of heart, to dissolve the hate of Lewis Carnoby, and to reunite in a harmony of loving friendship what hatred had driven, and hardened, apart.

These three stories have the advantage of being interesting quite apart from their religious setting. They supply a need met by extremely few books: that of making attractive and plausible the life of the soul in its direct relations with the Master. Events are but the outer reflection of inner states of consciousness and being; once given knowledge of this inner life, and the daily task as well as some critical experience, are seen to have their bearing, and to reap their harvest, for the soul. The life of prayer and the power of prayer are set forth with remarkable understanding and lucidity. Descriptions of experience in prayer are by no means easy; either they seem fanciful, or are forced. Michael Wood has succeeded in making even visions neither vague nor materialized. They are infused with a true religious spirit, and just sufficiently veiled in the mystery of the unknown to prevent any mechanical or psychological construction. This is praise not only for their truth, but for the literary art at the command of the author. We look forward to further works from the same pen. JOHN BLAKE, JR.

Every once in a while some one writes what is called "an occult novel," which I take to mean a romance dealing with occultism. Will Levington Comfort has recently perpetrated another of these singular works, called *The Last Ditch.* I believe his books are widely read, but I do not know why. The only merit I can find in them is a large imagination; he has big ideas. But he cannot write simple and grammatical English; his character drawing is a huge joke; and his smattering of occult reading is so superficial that it does not save him from the crudest mistakes.

The hero is a neurotic dipsomaniac, who goes on a nine months' spree because a woman he meets casually won't have him. He is picked out of the gutter by a secret band of reformers in China. He at once becomes a member of the innermost circle, is trusted with an important mission to the Inner Temple of the Masters of Wisdom in the Erbi Desert! falls—tumbles headlong—in love with another woman; spends most of his nights walking the floor in sleepless agony because he cannot get just what he wants the instant he wants it; is more than willing to abandon his mission and betray his friends for the sake of the woman, but is not permitted to do so. He is the kind of man no sensible person would trust to carry out the easiest and most commonplace of tasks. I do not think he slept more than three or four nights from the beginning to the end of the book, but when he did sleep, it was the sweet and dreamless slumber of the little child. That gives the atmosphere of the book.

So far as the occult side is concerned all I need say is that when he returns from his mission, knowing his special friend to be in danger and finding his door locked, he goes to his own room and spends the night in the deepest and highest meditation, the theme being his meeting with his love-lady, who awaits the accomplishment of his mission! After this last, or almost the last, sleepless night, he finds his friend murdered, so he hastens to the heroine, with whom, we are given to understand, he proposes to produce the beginnings of the new race, which is to repeople the world and bring about a new dispensation. C. A. G.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

QUESTION No. 202—(*Continued*).—*What do the Masters do with free will?*

ANSWER.—The Masters are doing all those works with free will which they can do, and which ought to be done. They never hesitate, or act reluctantly, or choose the "dearer" for the "better," as we so often do.

Though they have an insight that is omniscient compared to our power of discernment, there may be high matters that excel even their wisdom. Then they ask for higher advice, or act on principles. But in all cases they act with free will, because their only will is to fulfil the Law. They have with free will given up all self-will and made their will *one* with the will of the Supreme God. What a glorious example they have set us. T. H. K.

QUESTION 210.—(*a*) *Is it possible for us to atone vicariously for the sins of others?*

(*b*) *If so how can that be reconciled with the justice of Karma?*

(*c*) *To what extent must intention and love come into operation to make a good deed one of vicarious atonement?*

ANSWER.—I do not think that it is possible for *us* to atone vicariously for the sins of others. Karma would thus seem to be a blind law demanding that the balance of its harmony be kept no matter who is responsible for the restoration. But if we regard Karma as a Law of Cause and Effect, consciously acting through its agents and ministers, the Masters of Wisdom, the matter becomes otherwise. I think that the Masters can so *guide the operation* of the Law that it may *seem* as if another had atoned vicariously for our sins. In this way intention and love, acting together, can be set in operation by our fellow-humans and guided to our help in the working out of the Law. It is we ourselves who have to restore the balance of the Law in the course of time. But that the exact moment may be deferred to one more favorable to our fulfilling the Law, is, I think, within the power of the Masters who are enabled so to act by the love and urgency of action and prayer of others on our behalf. Yet in this They must deal justly in regard to others whom we may originally have injured. It is we who are helped to restore the balance by the love and intention of others, by the force which they direct to us and this is guided to aid our own effort: we have to make that effort and no one can do it for us. All the same, others can add their force to ours and sacrifice themselves to make that effort more favourable in result. But *we* and no one else, have to begin. A. K.

ANSWER.—(*a*) Where should we be if the Master had not vicariously atoned for us? The Saints and other disciples of His aim to do this, according to testimony and, indeed, observation.

(*b*) If a man pays his son's debts it may be considered part of the father's Karma to be able to do this and part of the son's Karma to be so aided—we are unwise to judge in terms of a single life. So on the spiritual plane—who dares to judge how the account may stand between us and another individual. Perhaps this is our chance to return the vicarious atonement made before for us.

(*c*) The father paying the son's debts does so with the intention to help the son and is prompted by love of the son—or he should be, to make it truly an act of atonement and not an exhibition of pride. The test of the atonement lies in the intention and the love. S.

ANSWER.—(*a*) It is commonplace that we suffer vicariously from the sins of others. The Second Law of Force—"for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction"—on a higher plane appears as the Twin Doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation. These remove injustice from heredity and "fate," substituting a loving guidance, a paternal control. Is it reasonable to suppose that if we may suffer vicariously from sin that we may not atone for sin? Our Lord suffers, as He has told more than one of the Saints, from our sins, yet we know He does this joyously in order that He may atone for our sins. As with all the great Teachers His followers strive to imitate Him, to grow into His likeness—"Be ye perfect, even as the Father"—so, apparently we not only may, but, indeed, we should, seek to atone vicariously for the sins of others. How may we do this? Perhaps by remembering and applying "everything is founded upon sacrifice—God set the example when He created the universe."

(*b*) It is our Karma, being born in the West, in Christendom, to have Our Lord atone for us. Why not consider it is the Karma of some loved and sinning one that we may atone vicariously for him or her? Perhaps it may be our Karma to be allowed to begin paying on account of the debt we owe Him or some other friend who has intervened for us. It may be the best of good Karma for us to be allowed to suffer and atone vicariously for another.

(*c*) The faithful wife nursing a husband through delirium tremens; the devoted mother sacrificing sleep and strength for a sick child, each act from intention and love. Can sacrifice or atonement be sought or achieved in any other way? G. V. S. M.

ANSWER.—(*a*) Is it not true that the real penalty for sin, the one to be feared, is the spiritual blindness that results from it, or in different terms, the further separation from God? From one point of view, to "atone" for sin is to effect the reconciliation, the "at-one-ment" with God by the removal of the spiritual blindness which is itself the barrier. We do not have to appease the supposed "anger" of a "jealous" God. God will always welcome the most erring of His children who turn to Him. But we do have to turn to Him and to turn our hearts we must, in some measure at least, see with the eyes of the spirit that to which we would turn. That one person, by sacrifice of self, by showing forth in his life the beauty of the spirit, may open the sin-blinded eyes of others to that beauty and turn their hearts toward it, is a fact within the experience of everyone.

(*b*) We may describe Karma as the operation of the law of cause and effect which inevitably shows us the results of the choices made by our free will, the fruit that grows from the seed we elect to plant. Its purpose is to teach, not to punish. It is not a question of balancing a ledger but of learning a lesson. We may learn slowly, in blindness, through pain and suffering, or rapidly with the open eyes of the spirit finding joy even in the suffering itself. There is no "injustice" in opening the eyes of another.

(*c*) Surely a deed is not "good" at all unless its motive be love and its power for good must be in direct proportion to the strength of the love which entered into it. I should think that while all good deeds aid the world by adding, as it were, to the general spiritual reservoir of good, intention would give the definiteness and one-pointedness necessary to help in a specific direction. J. F. B. M.

ANSWER.—In discussing the laws of falling bodies, it is assumed, for the sake of simplicity and to make the results more easily intelligible, that the earth is at rest. But, in reality, the earth is by no means at rest. It rotates daily on its axis

(at the equator the movement is over 1,000 miles an hour); it sways slightly across its orbital path, owing to the attraction of the moon; it moves in its orbit around the sun a distance of about 1,500,000 miles a day (more than 1,000 miles a minute), while, with the whole solar system, it is moving through space towards the constellation Hercules, at a rate possibly greater. Yet, for simplicity, it is assumed to be at rest.

In exactly the same way, in order to make the idea of Karma (the moral law of cause and effect) clear and intelligible, it is assumed that a man has a separate Karma, something engendered wholly by himself, and to be enjoyed or endured wholly by himself. In reality "no man liveth to himself alone or dieth to himself alone." His Karma is involved with that of his family, his nation, his sub-race and Root Race, with that of all Humanity; and this, very fortunately, includes the Saviours of Humanity, the mighty Masters who, like Siddhartha the Compassionate, say "Let the sin of the Kali Yuga rest on me, but let mankind be saved;" or, with the Western Avatar, "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Yet both these Masters knew accurately every detail of the laws of Karma. C. J.

ANSWER.—Perhaps the connection is not very close, and it is certainly not very clear, but as I read this question I was reminded of a verse from Stephen Crane's *Black Riders.*

"Behold the grave of a wicked man, and near it, a stern spirit.

"There came a drooping maid with violets, but the spirit grasped her arm. 'No flowers for him,' he said. The maid wept: 'Ah, I loved him.' But the spirit, grim and frowning: 'No flowers for him?'

"Now this is it—If the spirit was just, why did the maid weep?"

What is there that can make us wish to atone for the sins of others? I think we can find no other answer than love. Love either for the one who has done the wrong or love for the one who has been injured by it—but in any case love. And if we go on and ask ourselves how there can be such love, it seems to me that again there is only one possible answer. Somewhere, concealed beneath the wrong, wronged by the wrong, there must be something that elicits love,—something of love's own nature, something that is good. Let us call it the soul—though perhaps names matter little—and we shall be led to say, that the desire we may feel to atone vicariously from love of another for the evil that other has done, is evidence that there is that in his soul of opposite nature to that evil,—that there is that in his soul capable of working on our hearts and wills as it is not capable of working upon its own.

As when a friend has broken his arm or leg we will lend him the services of ours —doing for him what, for the time being, he cannot do for himself, so we may seek to make our hearts and acts and prayers serve the will of his soul in the place of those he cannot command because of the evil that dominates his instrument. It is still his soul's will that moves ours—through our love; it is still his real self acting, but now dependent upon us for the means of acting; dependent upon our love and, above all, upon the insight and faith of our love to see and respond to his true will as his own personality cannot.

From partial paralysis we may recover if time be given for the influences of health to overcome those of inhibition, or for the surplus vitality of one organ to learn to perform the functions of the one diseased. But complete paralysis is death. It is the faith of those who love us that may keep our souls alive.

I cannot see in this anything contradictory to even the narrowest conceptions of the law of Karma. The ultimate source of the atonement—the origin of the love that wills to sacrifice and to make vicarious atonement—is in the soul of him who sinned and who is loved. Were it not so, were love not anchored in reality at both its ends, it would not be real love.

Yet when we have said all this, and reduced it to the logic of our minds, the mystery remains. For love is the great, the unending mystery of life, and no man can reduce its power or its workings to logic. For love is of God and God is love—and it is even God who atones for sin. M.

ANSWER.—To me the doctrine of vicarious atonement is not only a great spiritual fact, but a logical spiritual *necessity*. Like all fundamental facts, its immensity makes it horizonless to our limited vision, and the fragments we perceive become distorted in the lens of our comprehension. Nevertheless, when we push through mental distortions in our search for truth, we arrive at Unity, that all-embracing recognition of the Absolute upon which our principle of Brotherhood rests—the oneness of all souls in the Oversoul; and considering vicarious atonement in its light, we divine that on the plane where souls are one, I sin in my brother and he sins in me.

I have heard it objected that on the plane where souls are one, sin does not exist. But to this I cannot agree, since *without conscious willing* sin could not exist at all, and both consciousness and will are constituent parts of the Divine Life. Therefore, when a man sins, he sins with and against his soul, prostituting its divine powers to devilish ends, dragging its Divine Life down to hell.

If, therefore, I have sinned in my brother's sin, I may atone for that sin by my own reparation.

Hence, also, in "Adam's sin," all men, born and unborn, sinned (as one drop of coloring fluid stains a whole vessel full of water, and we cannot distinguish the culpable drop), and so in him all die. So also in Christ, the perfect man, shall all be made alive.

Now for the full efficacy of Christ's atonement, we are told that we must believe,—belief positive, that is, not negative; not passive acquiescence, the condition of most so-called "Christians," but a mind accepting and understanding Christ through love (the only way in which we can ever understand anything), and a life fashioned in accordance with that acceptance. To grasp the full significance of this, we must recognize here this fact: we sin in our brother's sin when anywhere in our nature exists something of the tendency or weakness which came to expression in him. The water not in the vessel in which the coloring fluid was dropped, is not stained by it. What determines the shape and size of the vessel of the simile? Desire, which is what moulds all form bodies. The purity or impurity of our desire thus determines whether or no we are participators in our brother's sin, and that, not as we may judge it to be, but as it appears in the light of all-revealing Divine Truth.

Since in Adam all men sinned, however, we are safer in assuming the sad possession of stained and perverted nature. Yet as through discipleship we strive towards the perfection of the Father, and so enter more and more into the nature of Christ, we too shall in our turn become more and more able to "atone," substituting purity for impurity, a will united to the Divine Will for a formerly perverted one. Christ was in all ways tempted as we—St. Paul, a great Initiate, tells us—but *without sin*. He *struggled* in Gethsemane; without that struggle and victory, the Crucifixion would have been of none effect for us. Christ took upon him man's nature, and in *man's nature was tempted* and triumphed. Greater works than these shall ye do, said the Master, because I go to my Father. Some day may the full glory of that promise flood over us, as its meaning enlightens our understanding.

These are mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven. Let us see through mental fogs (our own and others), to where at the heart of dogma lies the light of Truth, and so prove ourselves theosophist in more than name. CAVÉ.